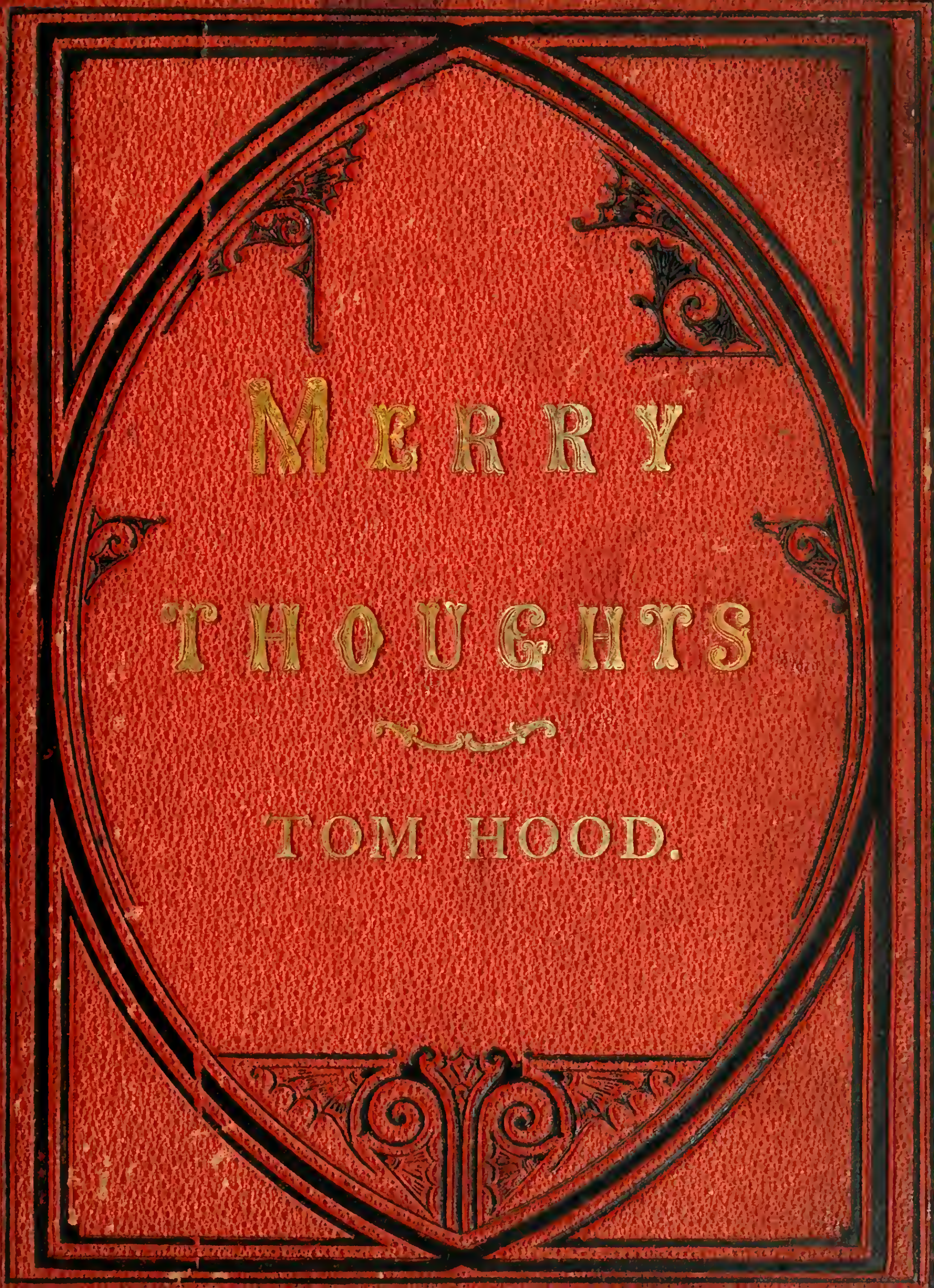


MERRY THOUGHTS

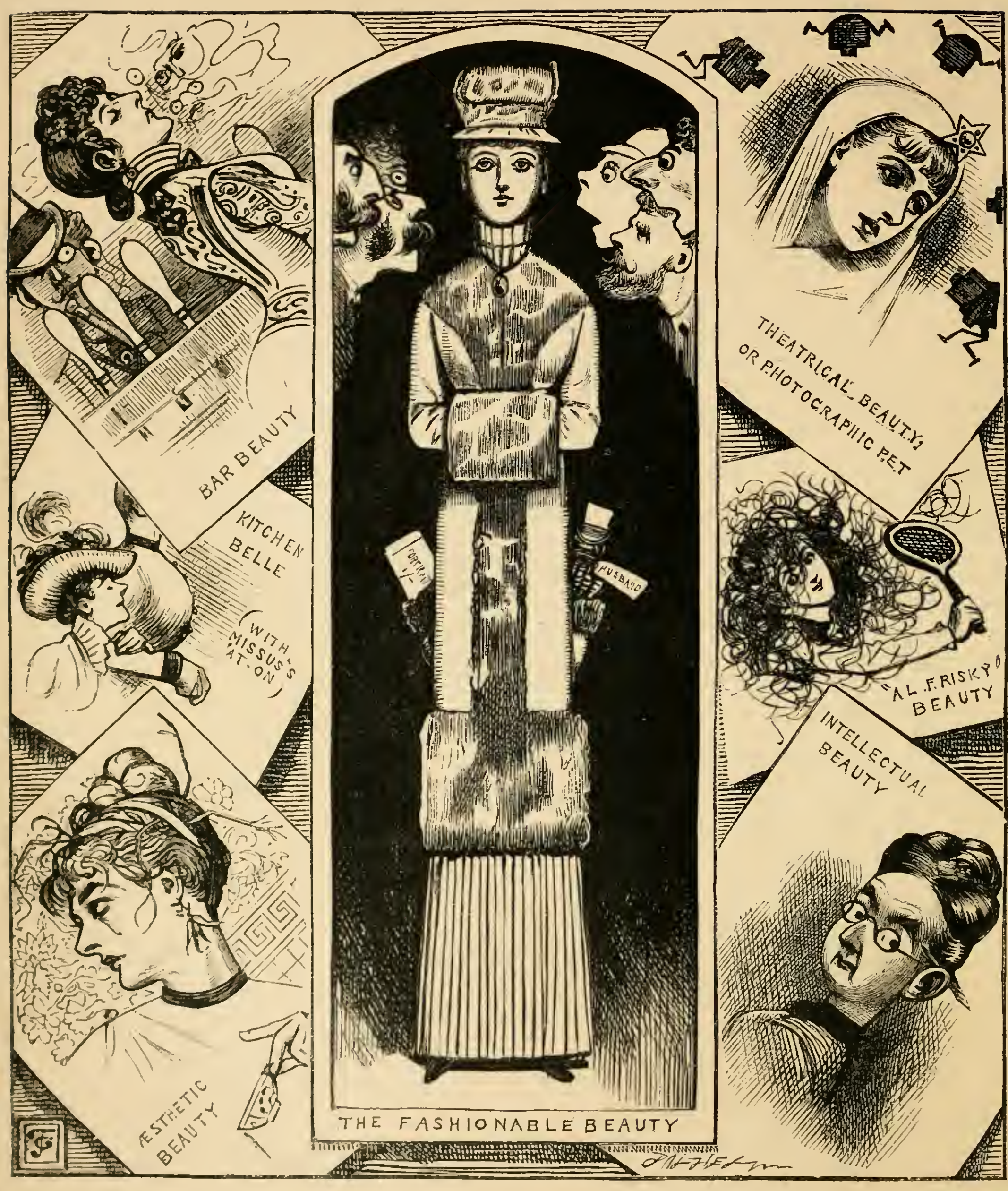
TOM HOOD.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/merrythoughts00hood

75

FUN
EVERY TUESDAY.
ONE PENNY.


BAR BEAUTY
KITCHEN BELLE
(WITH MISSUS'S AT-ON)
ÆSTHETIC BEAUTY
PORTRAIT
HUSBAND
THE FASHIONABLE BEAUTY
THEATRICAL BEAUTY OR PHOTOGRAPHIC PET
AL. F. RISKY BEAUTY
INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY

BEAUTIES OF THE PERIOD.

MERRY THOUGHTS.

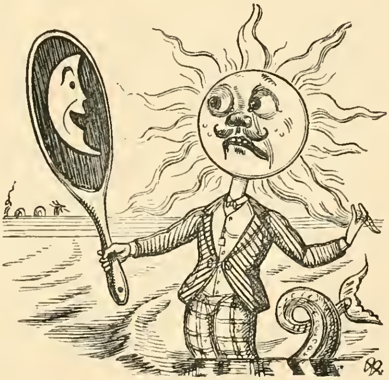
BY

TOM HOOD

AND OTHER AUTHORS.

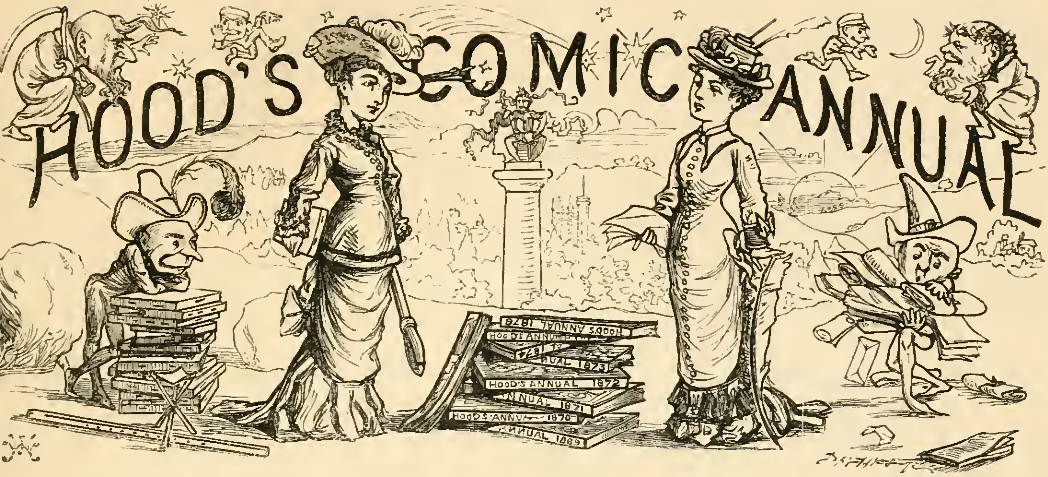
PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED BY VARIOUS ARTISTS.

ENGRAVED BY DALZIEL BROTHERS.



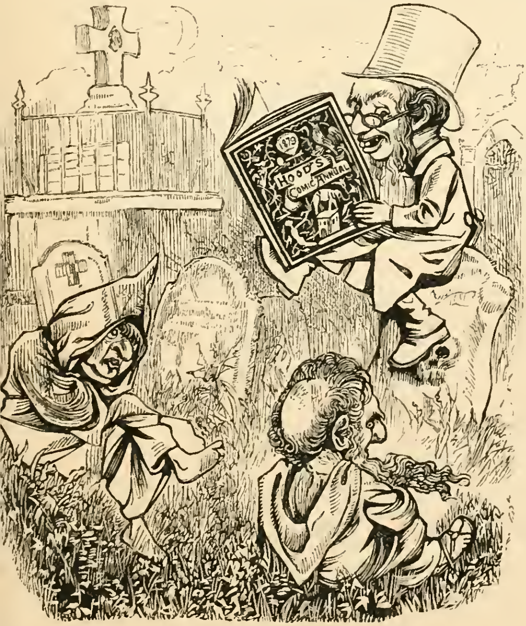
LONDON:
PUBLISHED AT THE "FUN" OFFICE,
153 FLEET STREET, E.C.

SRLF
URL
oc/20906368


HOOD'S COMIC ANNUAL
HOOD'S ANNUAL 1878
HOOD'S ANNUAL
1874
ANNUAL 1873
HOOD'S ANNUAL 1872
ANNUAL 1871
HOOD'S ANNUAL 1870
ANNUAL 1869

THE POTENCY OF COMIC ANNUALS.

(An Ill-concealed Advertisement.)


1879
HOOD'S COMIC ANNUAL

YOU generally find
  That folks of all conditions
Are anything but kind
  To ghostly apparitions;
To cheerless spots and wet
  The ghosts we always shoulder,
And there they sit and fret,
  And miserably moulder.
But give the ghost a chance
  Like any living body;
Invite him in to dance
  Or take a little "toddy;"
He'd undergo a quite
  Delightful reformation
With proper warmth and light
  And cheerful conversation.
I've theories that fit
  This theme, and like to spout 'em;
The space will not admit
  Or I'd enlarge about 'em.

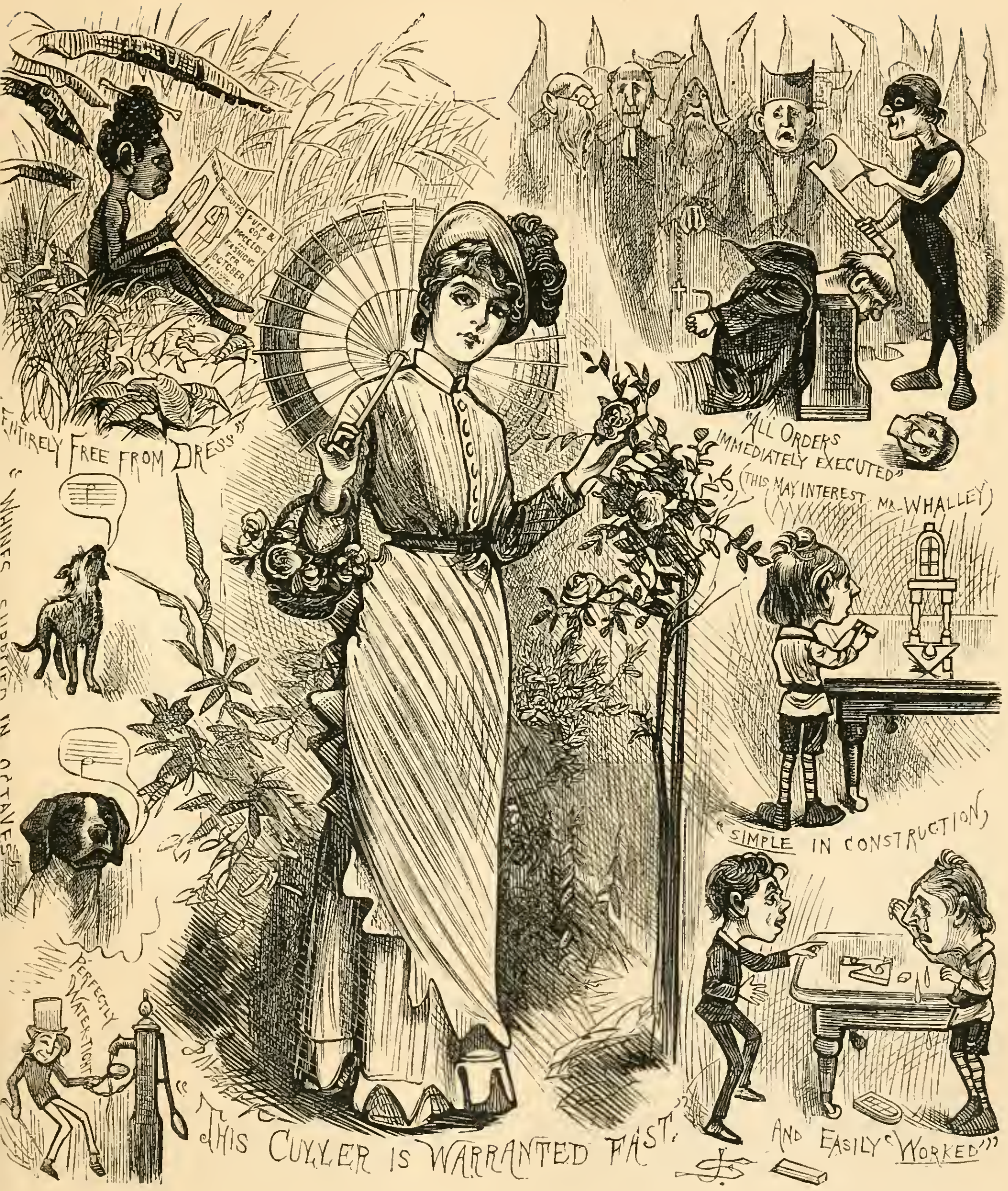
Amid my lordly park
  (A commonplace possession
Among, I may remark,
  The Comic Bard profession),
Amid its wooded land,
  In fine chaotic jumble,
A monastery and
  Its cemetery crumble.
For this secluded spot
  At eventide I started,
And haply found a lot
  Of ghosts of monks departed;
These shades were damp and sad,
  A thing to be expected
In ghosts who always had
  Been brutally neglected;
As dismal as their home,
  Their single recreation,—
A musty spectre tome
  With queer illumination.

I recognized aright
  The physic they were needing—
A little wholesome, light,
  Exhilarating reading.
The yearly books were new
  And gay with illustrations;
I went and chose a few
  Among these publications;
These books are full of fun,
  Their moral tone is blameless;
Particularly ONE,
  Which ever shall be nameless.
I read these books aloud;
  The act was well-directed;
The disembodied crowd
  Were visibly affected;
But laughter was unknown
  To these monastic sages
Whose sanctity had blown
  About the middle ages.

They thought they ought to weep
  On hearing comic verses,
Displaying all the deep
  Solemnity of hearses.
I realized with ease
  This fault of education;
I taught them by degrees
  The art of cachinnation.
The erst despondent elves
  Became elate and hearty;
They gave among themselves
  A weekly dinner-party;
A joyous mortal tone
  Now marked their every action,
Transparency alone
  Betraying their extraction;
Though some of mortal clay,
  I have my own suspicions,
In this especial *trait*
  Excel those apparitions.

J. F. Sullivan.

SOME TRADE ADVERTISEMENTS.


"Entirely Free from Dress"
THE SUITS
PUFF & COY
PRICE LIST
FASHIONS FOR OCTOBER
"All Orders Immediately Executed" (This may interest Mr. Whalley)
"Whines supplied in octaves"
"Perfectly Water-tight"
"Simple in Construction,
and Easily Worked"
"This Culler is Warranted Fast."

IN THE WRONG BOX.

WHEN Eagle Davis died,
I was sittin' by his side,
'T was in Boston, Massachusetts; and he said to me, "Old boy!
This climate—as you see—
Isn't quite the size for me;
Dead or livin', take me back if you can to Ellanoy!"

So I took him by the hand,
But he'd just run out his sand,
And his breath was gone for ever—before a word would come;
Then I and other three,
Together did agree,
In a party for to travel and to funeralize him home.

But Goshen Wheeler said,
As he looked upon the dead,
Weepin' mildly, "Just remark my observation what I say:
That deceased, now glori*ous*,
Was in life a curious cuss,
And somethin' unexpectable will happen on the way.

"Frum the time that he was born
Till he doubled round the Horn
Of Death, all his measurements and pleasurements were odd.
And odd his line will be
As you're registered to see
Till his walnut case is underneath the gravel and the sod."

It was bitter winter weather
When we all four got together
At the depôt with the coffin in an extra packin' box,
And a friend, with good intent,
A cask of whiskey sent,
Just to keep our boats from wrackin', as they say, upon the rocks.

Then a ticket agent he
Seein' mournin', says to me,
"Can I get the cards, or help you in your trouble, Mister Brown?"
So with solemn words I said,
As I pinted to the dead,
"There you'll find, I guess, our pilgrimage and shrine is written down."

Then all night beneath the stars,
We sat grimly in the cars,
Sometimes sleepin', sometimes thinkin', sometimes drinkin', till the dawn;
And each man went in his turn
To the baggage-crate to learn
If the box was keepin' time with us; and how 't was gettin' on.

Then all day beneath the sun,
Still the train went rushin' on,
While we still kep' as silent as grave-stones as we went:
Playin' euchre solemnly,
Which we kinder did agree
With the stakes to build for Davis a decent monu-*ment.*
'Bout once in every mile
Some mourner took a smile,
But we did no other smilin' as we travelled day or night,
And once in every hour
Some one went into the bower,
And reported the receptacle of Davis was all right.

But when four days were past,
Which we still were flyin' fast,
Goshen Wheeler, very solemn, with expression to us cries,
"Where we are it should be freezin'
And our very breaths a-squeezin',
Whereas the air is hot enough to bake persimmen pies.

"Don't you smell a rich perfume
As of summer flowers in bloom?
'T is magnolias a-peddled by yon humble coloured boy:
Now, I never yet did know
That the sweet mag-no-li-o
Grew in winter in the latitude of Northern Ellanoy."

Then said Ebenezer Dotton,
"I behold a field of cotton,
And I wonder how in thunder such a veg'table got here.
I don't know how we're fixed,
But the climate's gettin' mixed,
And it's spilin' very rapidly with warmness as I fear."

Spoke Mister Aaron Bland,
"I perceive on yonder land
That sugar-cane is bloomin', correctly, all in rows,
And not to make allusions
To Republican delusions,
But the niggers air a-gettin' all around as thick as crows."

Still we sat there mighty glum
Till along a fellow come.
And I says, says I, "Conductor, now tell us what it means,
Just inform us where we be?"
"Wall, now, gentlemen," said he,
I reckon we air comin' to the spot called New Or-leéns."

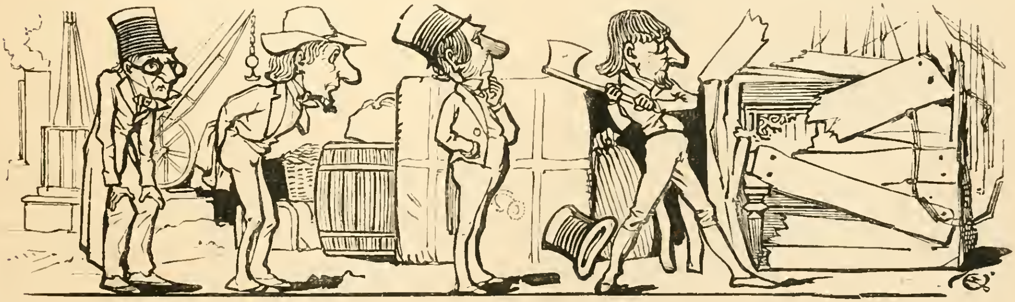
So we rushed all in a row,
When we got to the depôt,
To the baggage-crate a-wonderin' at these transformation scenes;
And we found out unexpected,
That the box had been directed
Not unto Ellanoy, but to a man in New Orleéns!

Without carin' if I'd catch it,
I straightway took a hatchet,
And busted off the cover without openin' my mouth;
And found a grand pianner
Which we'd followed for our banner
All the way from Massachusetts unto the sunny South!

Then I said, "I rather guess
I can see into this mess,
And explain the startlin' error which has given you such shocks.
When that Boston fellow, he
Asked the route I'd take of me,
I pinted, inadvertional, unto another box."

Now Eagle Davis lies
Beneath the Northern skies,
Where the snow is on the pine-tree while we are with the palm,
But I reckon if his spirit
Should ever come to hear it,
He'll be perfectly contented with the story in this psalm.

CHARLES G. LELAND.



OLD HEADS ON YOUNG SHOULDERS.

MR. BROWNSMITH hoped that it would be a boy; was indeed confident that it would be a boy. Mrs. Brownsmith, on the other hand, maintained a prudent reserve; her aspirations and her opinions remained unexpressed. She contemplated the subject broadly—she eschewed details. She prepared to give the expected child the warmest of welcomes, the best and choicest of baby linen. Boy or girl, what did it matter? It was enough for her that it would be a baby, and that she would be its mother—Mr. Brownsmith, of course, being its father. But when events of this sort are under consideration, the father is usually viewed as "a bad second"—to employ a term of the turf—if, indeed, he may not rather be described as "nowhere."

The Brownsmiths had been married some years. Their childless state had been a source of keen regret to them. It was, therefore, with much gratification and special interest they now looked forward to the advent of a bantling—possibly a son and heir—at the very least, a daughter and heiress.

Jacob Brownsmith was a prosperous gentleman: he had realized a very comfortable fortune by his successful trading in spermaceti, spelter, and sundry other articles. His offices were in Mincing Lane; his private house, "a noble mansion," according to the auctioneers, was in Harley Street, Cavendish Square. He had married rather late in life, having long been regarded by his friends as a confirmed bachelor. But, of course, confirmed bachelors are always possible husbands; just as the lowest class of savages are convertible into Christians when duly qualified missionaries arrive upon the scene.

Joseph Perkins and Jacob Brownsmith had been boys together—fond and firm friends. For some time they had run a sort of neck-and-neck race for fortune. But the prize was not for Joseph Perkins. He was at length completely outstripped by Jacob Brownsmith, who, when in sight of the goal, looked back to find his old comrade and rival altogether out of the running, prone upon the sward, fallen never to rise again. Dying, Joseph bequeathed his only child, Janet, to the care of Jacob, appointing him her sole guardian. Janet was not pretty exactly, but her looks appealed to sympathy. Jacob Brownsmith found himself much moved towards Janet Perkins. Presently he asked her to become his wife. Perhaps he thought he could best fulfil the duties of a guardian by combining with them the responsibilities of a husband. She consented. She did not love him, but she certainly liked him. He had always been very kind to her. She had not repented her acceptance of his suit.

Jacob Brownsmith was fifty, and looked as much. He was rubicund and double-chinned; his figure was rotund; his hair and whiskers were iron-grey. He was, indeed, a person of rather commonplace aspect. Still, he was a worthy and pleasant man, genial and frank; and he was supposed to have acquired his wealth by honest courses, although, as he openly avowed, he had sprung from nothing. He said this, however, with an air conveying that it was rather advantageous than otherwise to spring from nothing, and that, so springing, you were more likely than not to arrive at something. At the same time he admitted with regret that his education—he preferred to call it *eddication*—had not been what it might have been. He had, in truth, received few benefits of that kind. He understood his business and the City generally; but away from Mincing Lane he was an uninformed man. That he wrote a very bad hand did not matter so much, but he spelt shockingly; and he was profoundly ignorant of many things that are commonly known.

He was all the more resolved that the son about to be born unto him should be fully possessed of the advantages which he had been denied. The boy should be highly educated, both classically and commercially. No expense should be spared. He should be placed at the best of schools and colleges. The most accomplished masters should be secured and charged to instruct him extremely. He should learn Latin and Greek, possibly Hebrew, and certainly book-keeping by double entry. He should make the acquaintance of the ancient sages, poets, and historians, and should be intimate, nevertheless, with spelter and spermaceti. His morality should be likewise particularly cared for, and altogether he should become and be regarded generally as a superior person.

Jacob Brownsmith was, indeed, much bent upon his son's becoming a Superior Person.

II.

MIDNIGHT and past. The event so long looked forward to in the house of Brownsmith was now imminent. The doctor had been sent for. The nurse had already arrived—a portly woman, who spoke in a loud husky whisper—bringing with her an umbrella, a bundle, a brown paper parcel, a basket, and a large box covered with cow-hide and decked with brass nails. She evidently purposed to make some stay. She was as an army of occupation: there was no knowing exactly when she would vacate the premises.

A subdued and considerate knock at the street door. The Brownsmiths' medical man was in attendance. Lights whisked and flitted about the house. Converse was carried on in whispered tones.

Mr. Brownsmith felt that there was nothing for him but patience; although, under all the circumstances of the case, it was not so easy to be patient. He paced up and down, up and down the dining-room in Harley Street. The thick Turkey carpet deadened the sound of his footsteps. There were many bottles and glasses upon the table; a decanter of very choice port wine was especially to be observed. Mr. Brownsmith thought that possibly the doctor might like a glass of wine, or that the nurse might require support. Moreover, he felt his own need of refreshment; and he had a notion of drinking as soon as he possibly could to the health and long life of his son and heir. Meantime he waited, walking up and down. He lit a cigar, stirred and re-stirred the fire—it was wintry weather—but the room was already almost intolerably hot. He mixed himself a strong glass of brandy and water.

III.

SUDDENLY Mr. Brownsmith paused in front of his bookcase. His expression was one of vacancy or abstractedness as he glanced at his books, and he permitted his fingers to wander about them, lightly tapping their backs. Usually Mr. Brownsmith was not a man who cared for books. Still, there were books in his house—not many, but some—as there were pictures, china, chiffoniers, and cabinets. He took down one or two volumes, making his selection quite at random as it seemed. He found himself turning over the leaves of a work entitled "The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gent." He hardly knew what he was doing. A more modern production was tucked beneath his arm. It contained, among other things, curious particulars concerning a certain lady named Gamp.

He read of Mr. and Mrs. Shandy, of my Uncle Toby, of the birth of Tristram, and of other matters.

"'It is two hours and ten minutes, and no more, cried my father, looking at his watch, 'since Dr. Slop and Obadiah arrived, and I know not how it happens, brother Toby, but to my imagination it almost seems an age.'" And so on.

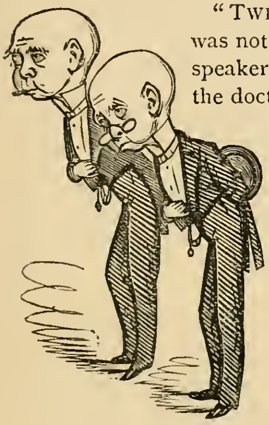
By-and-bye he was reading a true and particular account of one Mrs. Harris, related by her most intimate friend.

"'I have know'd that sweetest and best of women said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her head and shedding tears, 'ever since afore her first, which Mr. Harris, who was dreadful timid, went and stopped his ears in a empty dog-kennel, and never took his hands away or come out once till he was showed the baby, when being took with fits, the doctor collared him, and laid him on his back upon the airy stones, and she was told, to ease her mind, his 'owls was organs,'" &c., &c.

"Dear me, dear me!" said Mr. Brownsmith, and he mused over the appositeness of these passages, his own circumstances being considered. He recognized too that there was really more in books than he had been altogether aware of previously.

Then—whether it was induced by the unusual exercise of reading, or by the heat of the room, the strength of his brandy and water, the fumes of his cigar, or the very trying nature of the position in which he found himself, a certain numbness or lethargy stole over him, suppressing his sensations without wholly deadening his faculties. He did not go to sleep—he was quite positive as to that—but some of the earlier symptoms of sleep he admitted he did experience. All the same, as to his mind, he maintained that in the whole course of his life he had never been wider awake, if so wide.

IV.



"TWINS!" Mr. Brownsmith was not quite sure who was the speaker. It might have been the doctor. It might have been the nurse.

The room was dark. The lamp was burning dimly; the flame, a sickly blue in colour, flickered and smoked, emitting an unpleasant odour. The fire had sunk to a dark mass of embers, which glowed feebly but shed little light.

"Twins!" repeated Mr. Brownsmith. "I only expected one. I was not prepared for such a quantity."

He then became conscious that two figures had noiselessly entered the room, and were courteously bowing to him as they drew chairs towards the fire.

"Boys? twin boys?" inquired Mr. Brownsmith; and he peered at his visitors through the twilight of the room, seeking to discern their forms and features.

"We must introduce ourselves, it seems," observed one of the figures in a curious tone of voice, which had about it something of the treble of infancy, something of the tremulous piping of age, "or we might introduce each other. What say you, brother?"

"By all means. This is Castor."

Thereupon the figure thus designated bowed formally to Mr. Brownsmith, and then in his turn introduced his companion.

"This is Pollux."

The figure called Pollux bowed with equal formality, muttering something about the pleasure he felt at making the acquaintance of Mr. Brownsmith.

"Castor and Pollux!" muttered Mr. Brownsmith. "Highly classical, I believe. I never thought of quite such ancient names as that. But then I expected only one son. And I had intended to call him after myself—Jacob."

"The fact of our being twins makes a difference," observed Castor. "And there's a sort of etiquette about the thing: it's governed by an unwritten law. There must be some connection or harmony between the names of the twin-born; that is the usual course. You see, if you had called one of us Jacob, you must have called the other Esau. That, I submit, would hardly have done."

Mr. Brownsmith had become more accustomed to the darkened state of the room, or the lamp now afforded more light. He could see his visitors, not very plainly, perhaps, but still sufficiently. And he admitted forthwith the inappropriateness of calling either of them Esau, for really they had not a hair between them: they were as completely bald as very young children or as very old men.

Then he was led to ask himself: Are they young, or are they old? Are they aged babies, or babyish old men? What are they? Infants, boys, hobbledehoys, adolescents, men, sages, patriarchs, or what? Gnomes, sprites, imps, pixies, effreets, dwarfs, goblins, ghosts, spectres, phantoms, or what?

They had bald heads, protruding brows, and small flattened features. They were pallid of complexion, and flabby-looking, and what is called pasty-faced. Their large goggle eyes rolled and glared in a dazed, vacant, witless fashion. So far they might have been children who had but recently made their first appearance in the nursery. But these heads crowned the figures of lean, shrivelled, narrow-chested, spindled-limbed boys or young men. They wore high shirt-collars, and white cravats tied in the neatest of bows. They were clad in evening dress, making profuse exhibition of their shirt-fronts; heavy watch-chains swung in front of their waistcoats. Their hands were covered by white kid gloves; lacquered shoes and crimson silk socks adorned their feet. Each carried a Gibus hat. Both, by way of garnish to their mouths, held toothpicks between their lips, although such implements were clearly not required by their "boneless gums" (to employ Lady Macbeth's form of expression). They were surprisingly alike; it was hard to distinguish them. Mr. Brownsmith felt that he should never know them apart, or decide which was which. But there was just this difference: Castor wore spectacles; Pollux preferred a *pince-nez.*

V.

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Brownsmith, when he had completed his inspection of his visitors. "I was not quite prepared for this. And you are really my sons?"

"Well," said Castor, with an air of hesitation, "we are not unwilling that you should so consider us, if only out of regard to our mother's feelings on the subject. I think I may say so much, brother?" and he turned to Pollux.

"Quite so," said Pollux. "But we should wish you to view the admission that we are your children as made without prejudice."

"Precisely; without prejudice," echoed Castor.

"Without prejudice to what?" demanded Mr. Brownsmith, with a puzzled look.

"Well," said Pollux, "without prejudice to the wider question as to whether we can consider you as our father."

"I fear I don't understand you."

"I dare say not," observed Castor, shrugging his shoulders, and smiling with a sort of bland contempt. "We were prepared for this, brother, I think?"

"Fully prepared."

"We will descend to the plainest terms. My brother and myself have always looked forward to our father's being a very Superior Person."

Mr. Brownsmith started. This coincidence of ideas was curious. "I had always looked forward to my son's being a Superior Person," he said, with rather a wild expression of face.

"My dear sir, you may be the father of a Superior Person, or of Superior Persons. *Non constat*, as the lawyers say, that you are yourself a Superior Person. You agree, brother?" And Castor turned towards Pollux.

"Perfectly. Very well put," said Pollux, with a wave of his Gibus hat.

Mr. Brownsmith had a notion that he was being rather rudely treated.

"I am a plain man," he said sturdily. "I am well known in the City. I am worth a very tidy sum. I've dealt in spelter and spermaceti and other matters to a very pretty tune. My name is Jacob Brownsmith. I sprang from nothing. I've had little or no eddication. But I wished that my son——"

"Yes, yes; we quite understand. But you will permit me to say, my dear sir, that these biographical details, however interesting in themselves, have little bearing upon the question before us. That question—will you state it, brother?"

"That question is," said Pollux, "whether we can recognize you as our father. You see, you are not by any means a Superior Person; you are, indeed, upon your own showing, a decidedly Inferior Person; and as my brother just now stated, we have from our very earliest moments so counted upon our father's being a Superior Person. The result is that we find ourselves placed in a very peculiar dilemma—our disappointment is very considerable. That is so, brother?"

"That is so, without doubt. It's really a very sad thing when sons have reason to be ashamed of their father—when they are constrained, as a measure of justice to themselves, to decline his acquaintance, and, in point of fact, disown him altogether; very sad and very painful. But such cases sometimes occur."

"You mean that YOU disown ME?" cried Mr. Brownsmith. "Why, you ungrateful young monkeys, do you want to insult your own father? Tell me one thing—are you my children or are you not?"

"My dear sir, do not excite yourself. Do not raise your voice unduly. Please to recollect that there is an invalid upstairs—our mother, in point of fact. You would not be so inconsiderate as to disturb her, perhaps even alarm her, at a time when she stands particularly in need of repose and quiet. And do not misunderstand us. We did not intimate that we had decided upon disowning you. I think you can bear me out in that statement, brother?"

"Assuredly; and, as a matter of fact, we have *not* decided upon disowning you. Quite otherwise. We have been rather endeavouring to find some method of compromise, so to say. We thought it possible to hold our recognition of you in suspense, as it were, giving you meanwhile an opportunity of redeeming your character, or rather of acquiring a new one. We had no desire to condemn you absolutely unheard. We rather thought that if time were allowed you, you might really be able to improve yourself so as to become worthy of your position in our regard. You might instruct yourself or obtain instruction upon a great variety of matters. You might possess yourself of sundry accomplishments. Polish does so much. Why not polish in this case? That was one of the questions we asked ourselves."

"I'm too old a dog to learn new tricks, if that's what you mean," said Mr. Brownsmith.

The twins took no notice of this observation.

"We feel, of course," said Castor, "that many excuses are to be made for you. You are no longer young."

"I am fifty—a good fifty."

"You belong to the past. Yours was the pre-scientific generation. They taught little in your time, and taught that badly. And then you were not in the way of obtaining even that inferior instruction."

"I began life as an errand-boy. I learned my letters at a charity school."

"Pray spare us! You must surely be aware that these distressing details are not inducements to us to recognize you as our father. We would rather regard you as an elderly gentleman of property and respectable social position whose education has been unfortunately neglected."

"But who is now resolute," said Pollux, "as far as in him lies, to make up for lost time."

"What do you mean? What would you have me do?" demanded Mr. Brownsmith.

"Well, there are schools for backward boys; it may be that there are seminaries for backward old gentlemen."

"Do you dare to tell me that I am to go to school again?—at my time of life!"

"Well, it's very essential that something should be done," urged Castor. "I am sure you would wish to be a credit to us—to spare us anxiety on your account. You would not have us blush for you. It is so very sad when fathers fail in respect for their sons."

"And you must be aware that we have grave reasons to complain," continued Pollux. "I will not say much of your appearance: it is not what it might be, or what we could wish it to be. You will urge that Nature made you plain, and you have been content with that dispensation; but, without doubt, Art could have done something for you. You dress disgracefully. I do believe you buy your clothes ready made! You might at least employ some respectable tailor. And there is something rather offensive in the way you wear your hair, and about the cut of your whiskers. You seem to cultivate a sort of John Bull look that's very unpicturesque and altogether odious."

"I am sorry you don't like your father's looks young gentlemen," said Mr. Brownsmith, grimly. "Not that looks, to my thinking, signify much."

"Perhaps not," said Pollux; "but it isn't only looks—your manners are really deplorable; and you have no taste whatever."

"You eat peas with a knife, you know!" and Castor shook his head with an air of reproach.

"You call for beer at dinner."

"You've been seen employing a fork as a toothpick."

"You've been known to smoke a long pipe—a churchwarden—a yard of clay, you called it."

"Your favourite supper is tripe and onions. Don't deny it!"

"I am not going to deny it. I glory in it. Why shouldn't I eat tripe if I've a mind to?"

The twins replied only by a sort of duet of groans.

"Have you anything more to say, you insulting young ragamuffins?" demanded Mr. Brownsmith, noisily.

"We are not surprised at this violence," Castor said with composure. "It is only what we might have expected. It results naturally from ignorance and neglect. Sad, very sad! But can nothing be done to fit you for your situation as a parent? That you will ever become a Superior Person—a father in whom we may take pride—is, I fear, out of the question. May we hope for *any* amendment in you? Will you really try and turn over a new leaf? When will you make a beginning? Let us but see you in a proper state of mind, and really desirous of improvement and instruction."

"We will admit," added Pollux, "that the task before you is one of difficulty. At your age you shrink from change and from effort; and of course your want of preparation is dire—I can use no other word. I suppose you know nothing of the 'ologies'?"

"Not a rap," replied Mr. Brownsmith, sturdily.

"You have not even a rudimentary acquaintance with the classics? You could not even construe Cornelius Nepos?"

"D——n Cornelius Nepos!" cried Mr. Brownsmith. "That is," he explained in a milder tone, "I don't wish the gentleman any harm. I don't know him, and what 's more, if he 's one of your sort, my lads, I don't want to know him."

"I may take for granted, I suppose, that you have little or no acquaintance with modern literature and languages?"

"There 's one thing I know," said Mr. Brownsmith—"I shall be using very bad language in a minute or two."

"This is indeed a sad case, brother," said Castor. "Our only course would be to find some good school where old people of neglected education are received as pupils. Or perhaps we might discover a private home for him in the house of some zealous and devout clergyman accustomed to the care of the backward, the perverse, the neglected, or the ill regulated. Really, you know,"—and he turned from Pollux to Mr. Brownsmith,—"you can only hope to improve by absence from home, and submission to a wholesome course of scholastic discipline. I think you should have no holidays whatever, and although I am usually disposed to be liberal in such matters, I am rather of opinion that your allowance of pocket money should be made dependent upon your educational progress."

"You know," Pollux interposed, "there really ought to be an asylum for cases of this sort."

"What! you would send me to an asylum, would you? That 's how you would treat your poor old father, is it? Where's your duty as children? Where's your filial piety? Where 's the obedience and respect due from sons to their father?"

Mr. Brownsmith was now very angry indeed.

"The usual cant," replied Castor, shrugging his shoulders.

"It was just a case in which this old-fashioned rubbish was certain to crop up," observed Pollux. "How hard it is to eradicate the defects of early training! What are we to do, brother?"

"There is but one thing for us to do, brother."

"Precisely."

They rose from their chairs.

"This is a hopeless business," said Castor, holding up a minatory forefinger, and speaking *at* Mr. Brownsmith rather than to him. "In spite of all we have said and done, he remains obdurate. We must visit him with our filial indignation. We must disown him. He is an Inferior Person—hopelessly, abjectly inferior. He must never more look upon himself as a father of ours."

"He has made his bed, and he must lie in it."

"He may consider himself as one disinherited—cut off with a shilling. Go, old man; your future is no more an affair in which we have any interest. Henceforward you are no father of ours. We are no more your sons. You will be kind enough to forget that we ever existed. Farewell. We beg to wish you a very good evening."

Simultaneously and explosively they opened their Gibus hats, and moved towards the door.

"Stop!" cried Mr. Brownsmith. "I 've listened to you long enough; it 's high time you listened to me a little. I haven't much to say; but it 's to the purpose. In the first place, you 're a couple of worthless and contemptuous young prigs—that 's about what you are! Call yourselves Superior Persons, forsooth! Why, the first shoeblack or chimney-sweep or scavenger I may meet in the street, who 's got a grateful heart in his bosom, is a better man than either of you, or than both of you put together. *You* ashamed of *me?* It 's *I* that am ashamed of *you,* as I 've good cause to be, and ashamed of myself for being the father of such miserable little imps. *You* presume to dictate to your own father, to look down upon and despise him because he 's never had the advantages such as his honest industry has obtained for you, because he 's a self-made man, of little or no eddication to speak of! *You* talk of sending him to school again because he don't know this or that, or of locking him up in an asylum because he chooses to put his knife or his fork farther into his mouth than your worships quite approve, or because he talks a vulgarer sort of talk—being a plain man—than your lordships are accustomed to! Why, I say that you ought to have been made away with, both of you, in a pail of water or summat as soon as ever you were born, like a couple of kittens or puppies that are not wanted and no one cares to own!"

"We'd really better go, brother," said Castor to Pollux. "It's no use. There's no reason why we should subject ourselves to this low abuse and gross insolence. The fact is, however we may seek to conceal it from ourselves and from society, our father is a Cad! He never ought to have been our father. He should never have been allowed to marry our mother. Come, my dear Pollux."

"Stop, I say again!" shouted Mr. Brownsmith. "I've nearly done, but not quite. Just one word more. I'll disown you—I'll disinherit you—I'll cut you off with a shilling—a little later, not just yet. First of all I'll avail myself of my rights and privileges as a father. I won't spoil the children by sparing the rod. I'll punish you in the good old-fashioned way, which you may think exploded cant or bygone rubbish cropping up unexpectedly, until you feel it tingling on your bare backs. In plain words, I'll thrash you both, you Castor and you Pollux, within an inch of your scoundrelly young lives!"

Thereupon Mr. Brownsmith plunged passionately forward, with both arms extended, resolved to seize the twins by the collars of their coats, and to administer to them both personal chastisement in its severest form.

VI.

MR. BROWNSMITH suddenly found himself struggling in the arms of his medical attendant.

"Why, my dear friend, what's the matter? What has happened? You've let the fire out, and your lamp's expiring, and you are all in the dark! I see, I see! You've been asleep: over-fatigue—excessive exhaustion—severe trial of both mind and body. We can't overreach Nature, Mr. Brownsmith. We must deal fairly with her or she won't deal fairly with us. You've been asleep and have suffered from nightmare, the result of imperfect digestion and mental anxiety. But first let me turn up the lamp. There, now we can see each other. And let me congratulate you, Mr. Brownsmith. You are a father! I congratulate you most sincerely."

"A father am I? You did not meet anybody going out of this room as you entered it, did you, doctor?"

"I did not, Mr. Brownsmith. You have been alone here sir, quite alone; and, I may add, asleep and dreaming. I think you are hardly awake yet, if you'll excuse my saying so. I repeat my congratulations on your becoming a father, and I'm sure you will be glad to know that both mother and child are doing admirably—going on as well as could possibly be expected."

"There are not two of them, then?"

"Two children? No; only one this time, Mr. Brownsmith. Did you expect two?"

"I shall call him plain Jacob," said Mr. Brownsmith, abstractedly.

"Well, there's only this objection—I don't know what the feminine of Jacob may be—but the child happens to be a little girl."

"A little girl, eh? Then you don't think she's at all likely to be a Superior Person?"

"Well, Mr. Brownsmith, she's a very fine little girl, plump and pretty, and rather over the average size, I should say."

"Is she bald?"

"Not particularly so. Not balder than a baby is entitled to be."

"One question more. Does she wear spectacles?"

"Certainly not."

"Then we'll drink her health, and the health of her blessed mother!"

And Mr. Brownsmith poured out large and full glasses of the choice port wine.

DUTTON COOK.

A GHOST WANTED!

A SLAVE am I to Mystery, a bondsman to Romance;
My days as in a dream go by, my nights as in a trance.
I haunt a magic universe, exclusively mine own,
And sights of earth and sounds of earth to me are barely known.
Dim shapes along the busy Strand flit onward in a flood:
I deem them only airy things, not formed in flesh and blood.
What boots it that I *deem* them so?—It makes me cry almost
When I reveal this bitter fact:—I 've never seen a Ghost!

I read no trite or vulgar books, no scientific lore;
But court the supernatural that thrills me to the core.
The pulseless novels of the hour to children I resign;
Let "Frankenstein," "Zanoni," and "Le Juif Errant" be *mine.*
The tales of Mr. Maturin by heart I nearly know,
And those of Wilkie Collins and of Edgar Allen Poe,
Monk Lewis, Mrs. Radcliffe, and their fellows by the host:—
My labour 's only thrown away;—I 've never seen a Ghost!

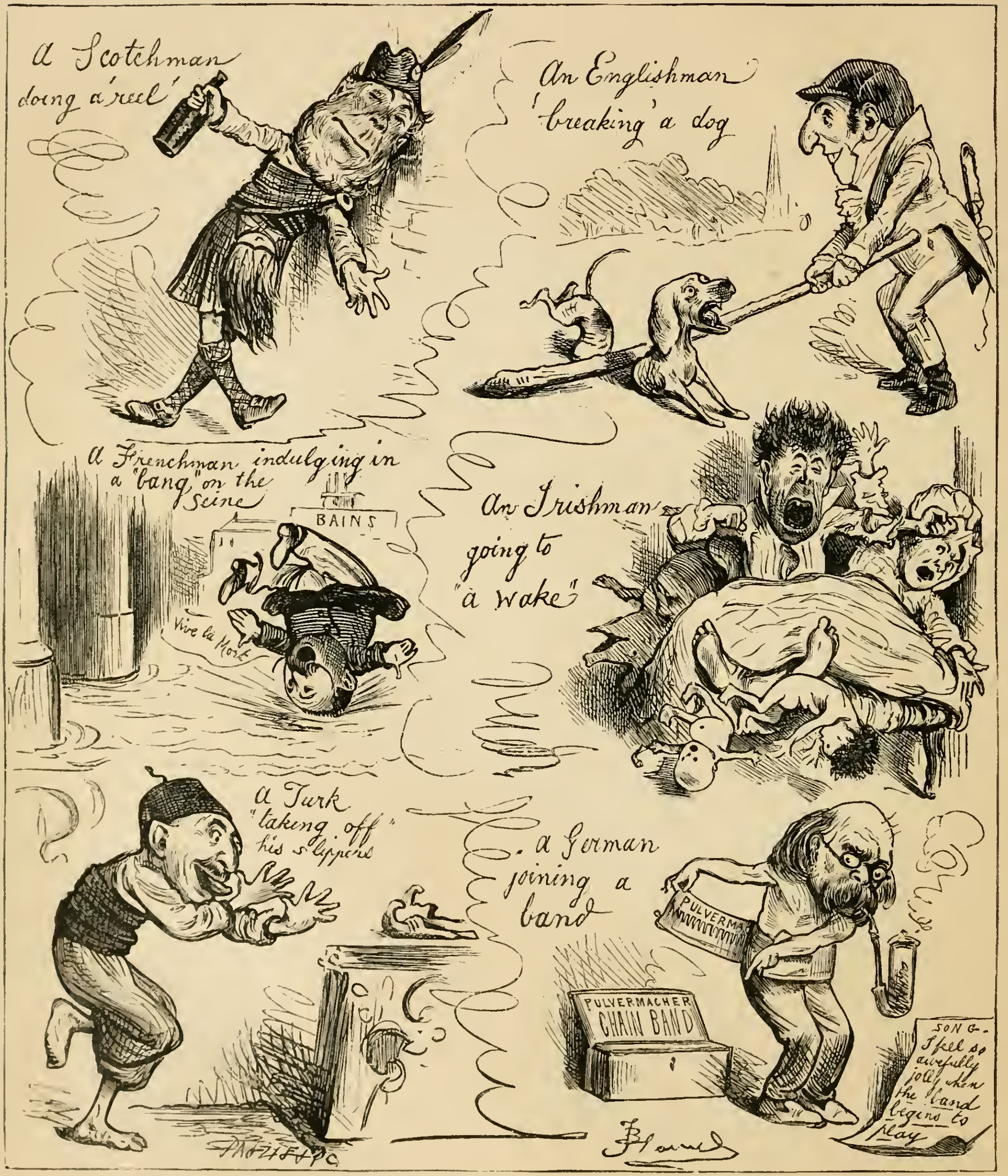
The course of diet I pursue is frightfully unfit
For man, for woman, or for child;—that 's why I follow it.
One apparition—only one—was all my end and aim;
But, though I waited night by night, no apparition came.
On chops and sausages of pork what suppers have I made!
What ghastly heaps of apple-pie, to lure the kindy shade!
Welsh rarebits have I revelled in, on thickly-buttered toast;—
But, though they cost me agonies, I 've never seen a Ghost!

I know 't is rarely they appear 'mid London's giddy din,
But seek the ivied manor house or haunt the lonely inn;
And, on the stroke of twelve o'clock—"the very witching time"—
Reveal some deeply-hidden hoard or nigh-forgotten crime.
But I have braved the lonely inn, the ivied manor house,
And suffered but a single fright:—methinks 't was but a mouse.
I vainly sought around my bed for shapes in ev'ry post;
But, nonsense!—nothing of the kind;—I 've never seen a Ghost!

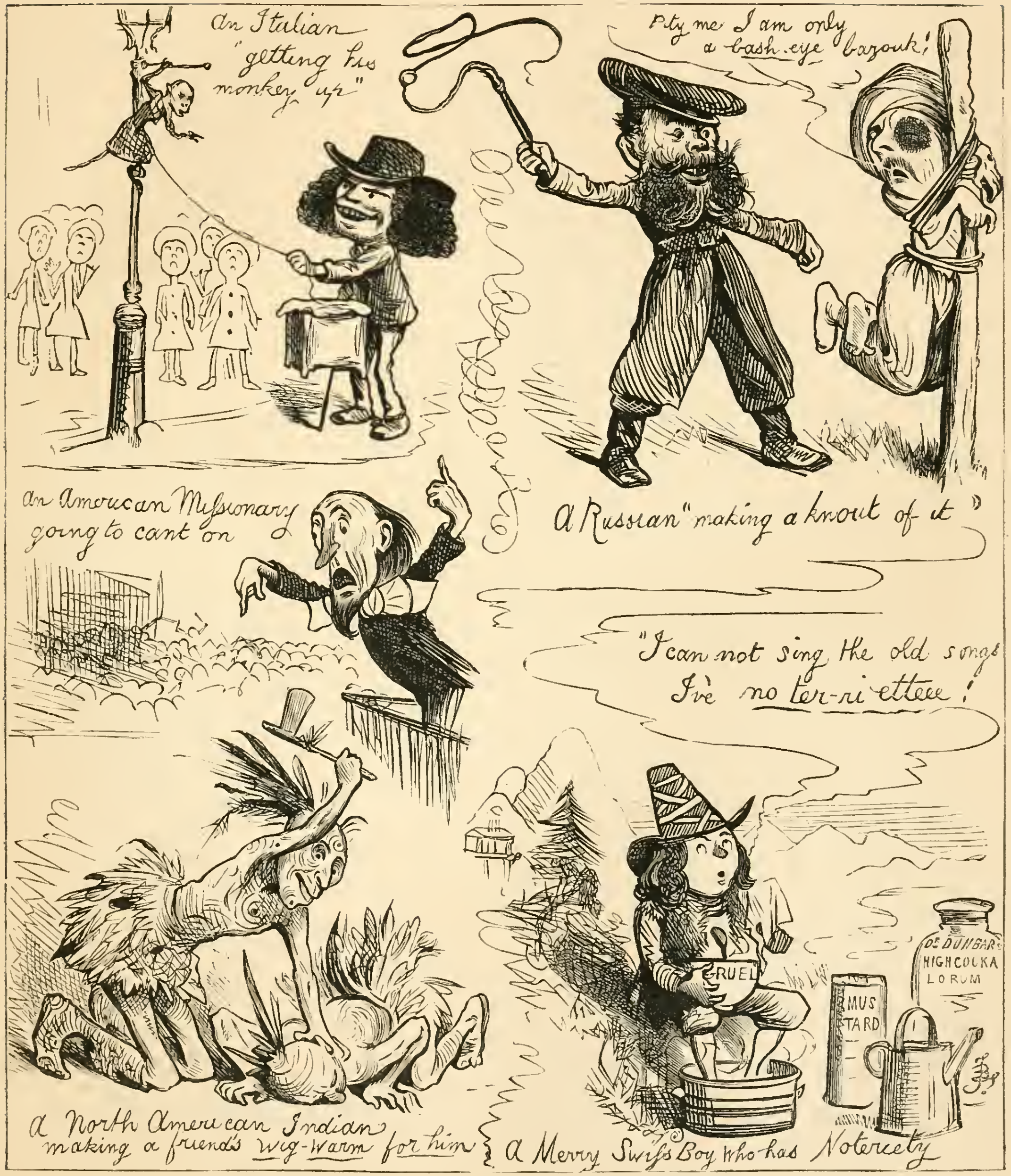
Why east and west upon my quest unhaunted should I go?
Some people see them ev'ry night,—at least they tell me so.
(I 've often heard my grandmamma describe a ghost she had,—
A lovely one, with saucer eyes, that sent her nearly mad.)
Alas! my efforts all are lost; my life is thrown away.
I 've little now to brag about upon my dying day.
Whatever few advantages are left for me to boast,
One blot will cancel all of them;—I 've never seen a Ghost!

HENRY S. LEIGH.

NATIONAL PECULIARITIES.


A Scotchman doing a 'reel'
An Englishman 'breaking' a dog
A Frenchman indulging in a "bang" on the Seine
BAINS
Vive la Mort
An Irishman going to "a wake"
A Turk "taking off" his slippers
A German joining a band
PULVERMA
PULVERMACHER CHAIN BAND
SONG. I feel so awefully jolly when the band begins to play
J Bland

NATIONAL PECULIARITIES.


An Italian "getting his monkey up"
Pity me I am only a bash-eye bazouk!
A Russian "making a knout of it"
An American Missionary going to cant on
"I can not sing the old songs I've no ter-ri-etteee!
A North American Indian making a friend's Wig-Warm for him
A Merry Swiss Boy who has Noterciety
GRUEL
MUS TARD
Dr DUNBAR's HIGHCOCKA LORUM

THE MAID O' BONTDHU.*

THE hills o' Dolgelly with honey are sweet,
The bell-heather purples them down to their feet;
And the sight up the Mawddach is glorious to see,
But I 'll sing you a ditty o' fairy Bontdhu.

A lad from the Westland sped thither one day,
By Chirk and Ruabon, brave, gallant, and gay:
He had heard of a maiden as blithe as a bee,
Sweet Wilhelmy Wynn o' the pretty Bontdhu.

By the deep dykes of Offa he shot like a swift
Or laverock lilting away in the lift,
The Vale of Llangollen, and sweet water Dee,
And the charms o' Llandrillo brimfull o' Bontdhu.

Then the broad Lake of Bala he saw in his flight,
But the woods o' Bryntillion enraptured his sight;
For there, by the Mawddach, as fair as could be,
Stood Wilhelmy Wynn, the delight o' Bontdhu.

Her eyes were ripe mazzards,† and raven her hair,
Each cheek a red apple, her forehead snow fair;
A bonny green kirtle hung down to her knee,
And rapture ran wild at the Lyn o' Bontdhu.

Her suitors were many: Smith, Owen, Rob Moore,
Hughes, Evans, Lloyd, Thomas, and Joneses a score;
With Roberts, MacDonald, and Andy M'Cree,
All dying in love for the Rose o' Bontdhu.

Still he ventured. "Dear lass, I have heard of your fame;
A sweet little melody rings in your name."
She chuckled, and oh, how bewitching looked she!
"Here's another in love with the maid o' Bontdhu."

Then praising her dimples he strove for a kiss,
When she cropped his young hope in the bud of its bliss:
"Pray stop, pretty bird, you are on the wrong tree!"
Chirped Wilhelmy Wynn with the pride o' Bontdhu.

He hung down his head like a hound in disgrace;
When, with rogue in each eye and a blush on her face,
She gave a loud laugh, but the ring of its glee
Told a fool was the heart of the Maid o' Bontdhu.

Love will not be baulked, so quoth he, "Pretty maid,
Just fancy myself at the Lyn in your stead,
And that *you* had come courting far over the lea,
What words would you woo me with, Maid o' Bontdhu?"

She answered in Welsh, but his patience was gone,
For colder than Snowdon she seemed to look on;
"I can't understand what you tell me," said he,
"But love has its lure, pretty Maid o' Bontdhu."

Then he talked of the Bards, and he piped her a stave,
A soul-melting lay of a love-fettered slave,
When her eyes flashed a light like the ripples at sea,
That token for rain. Were there tears at Bontdhu?

Every lane has its turning, and Nature will out:
Sweet Wilhelmy chid with the prettiest pout;
But maids are the same by the Dart and the Dee,
So she pitied the lad that had come to Bontdhu.

---

[*] Pronounced "Bonthee."

[†] The black cherries of North Devon.

He saw she was touched, as she coloured and sighed;
Still love must be wilful, so she, in her pride,
Sang, "Heart, play the hero and hold thyself free,"
When a keepsake he asked of the Maid o' Bontdhu.

Quoth she, "I will give you, whenever you leave,
A silver-new-nothing to wear on your sleeve."
"A bargain!" he cried, "and I pray you agree
To seal it at once, pretty Maid o' Bontdhu."

Old Cader had put on his cap for the night,
And the cotter's wee window-pane blinked with delight,
When a couple went cosy as cosy could be
Up the old road to Harlech, away from Bontdhu.

The moon was o'er Duffryn, and Venus hard by
Was seen with her silver love-lamp in the sky;
The stars woo in silence, and silent wooed he,
Life-linked with the beautiful Maid o' Bontdhu.

The hills o' Dolgelly with honey are sweet,
The bell-heather purples them down to their feet;
But the girls by the Mawddach are sweeter to me,
And the sweetest of all is the Maid o' Bontdhu.

EDWARD CAPERN.

THE CAMBERWELL BEAUTY.

A Romance of the Last Century.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRYST.

"'She cometh not,' he said."

WITHIN the Great City the watchmen took intermittent repose.

In the picturesque suburbs they had comfortably settled themselves for the night. Forth from the dark City came an adventurous lover, and wended his lonely way along the dim winding road which led to one of the loveliest of the neighbouring villages.

But it was not in search of the Picturesque the youth had set out. Some readers may think this remark needless, inasmuch as it is difficult to revel in the beauties of nature on a moonless, almost starless night; but little do such commonplace minds know of the fine frenzy of the Lover. Nevertheless, it was *not* the Picturesque which had lured our hero from the pillow that he loved so well.

His heart beat hard at the thought of the fair fond one he was going to meet; perchance, also, at the thought of the unfair footpad who might be coming to meet him.

However, he reached the village in safety.

Our hero's name was Jacob, a gallant 'prentice lad, who loved his master's daughter, the fair Mistress Margaret, sojourning for the summer with her parents at their rural "Box" among the willow-shaded watercourses and cabbage-grounds of Camberwell.

Thrice-happy Jacob! he not only loved, but believed himself beloved. His Margaret—as if desirous in the same breath to caress and to dignify his name—never called him aught but her Jacobus.

"My Jacobus!" The words fell like honeydew upon his ear, and thence dropped, soothing and yet intoxicating, upon his heart.

What services, however menial, would he not have performed for her—nay, had he not performed—when thus addressed?

And now, in obedience to the same sweet summons, inscribed in a billet conveyed by the driver of the cart that had brought in a supply of summer cabbage from the Box for her father's place of business and winter residence in the Borough (it was only by poetical license we erewhile spoke of the City), Jacob had turned his back on busy Southwark and reached the rural groves of Camberwell (Camberwell *Grove* at that time had not displayed its brick-and-mortar charms), and panted, partly through his having run good part of the way, but still more in eagerness to perform whatsoever his Camberwell Beauty might lay upon his allegiance.

He gained the top of the garden wall, and there he had to linger for a time, anxiously oscillating astride among the broken bottles, for the yard dog gave more than once a warning growl.

At last the Cerberus that guarded his Eurydice, his Persephone, his anybody beautiful and loved you please, was silent, and Jacob dropped gently from the garden wall, cutting his hands on the broken bottles almost as frightfully as he had torn his breeches. But the footpads had been escaped, the dog was silent, and Jacob felt of heroic strain.

"What are a few scratches? 'Faint heart never won fair lady,'" he said to himself, prudently taking care to keep his remarks quite to himself, and steadily, although stealthily, groped his way towards the back grassplot on which he had been bidden to wait. Even his heart, however, failed him slightly when compelled to crash through sticked peas and beans, and the reawakened Cerberus again began to yelp and growl. But with reckless boldness Jacob plodded across the yielding asparagus-beds.

True, even in the most propitious periods of his progress, misgivings would intrude.

"What," he thought, "would my master and his man do to me, if they found me here? Beyond doubt the gardener would crucify me on his rake, my master impale me on his spud. But I must persevere."

So he persevered, and walked into the little fish-pond. Fortunately it was not deep, but nevertheless it was damp, and he fancied that he felt the gold and silver fish, which he had roughly awakened from their slumbers, feasting on his calves, although they were not fatted. The dew was falling fast; so, could he have seen it, was the mercury in the thermometer nailed against the wall beside the back parlour window.

But if Jacob could not see the cold, he felt it, as he stood, dripping and shivering, waiting for the back bed-room window to be opened, according to promise.

Which was the back bed-room window whence his instructions were to issue he had not been told, and Jacob feared to cast up carefully-selected small gravel, to arouse his peradventure oversleeping-herself Goddess, at the panes of any. His master's bed-room might perchance be at the back, and Mr. Figgins—such was his name among his equals, by rude shopboys irreverently called Old Figs—was; Jacob knew, of a nature at once timorous and fiery. Disturbed in his snores by a rattle on his window-panes, Old Figs would doubtless, ere ostrich-like he buried his head in the bed-clothes, answer with a blunderbuss.

One or two stars had for some time been blinking, now they began to wink at one another in so marked a manner that our hero could not resist the conviction that, whatever might be the case on earth, he was mocked by heaven.

Such was his love, however, that still he waited.

But still she came not.

Longfellow then was not born, nevertheless Jacob quoted from him in unconscious anticipation.

"She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
She *sleeps!*"

our hero muttered in surprise, not unmingled with bitter scorn, when Aurora had laid her rosy finger-tips upon the curtains of the night, and yet there was no sign of Mistress Margaret's having flung back those of her mahogany four-poster.

In the Arcadian times of which we write, the bedsteads of France and of Araby (although the latter may be found in every desert tent) had not been wafted to our shores in painted iron or of gleaming brass. It was necessary for Jacob to retreat.

He had gained the top of the garden wall, and was preparing to manœuvre through the passes of the broken bottles, when, alas! the yard dog, which, after a troubled night, had come out to refresh himself by a stroll between the raspberry-canes in the morning twilight, sprang at the clinging climber.

With one bound our hero leaped into the lane outside, but he left a considerable portion of the remnant of his Sunday breeches in the possession of the yard dog, unsatisfactory spoil, which Keeper proceeded to worry with a disappointed growl.

The nodding "driver"—seated on the shaft, with nose ever and anon attempting to kiss his knees—of a wain, high-piled with the vegetable produce of our fair, fertile land, bound for the Borough Market, made no objection when the weary Jacob solicited a lift. Perchance the driver did not hear him, but 'tis always well to think the best of human nature; we have no other on which we can personally fall back.

However this may be, Jacob clambered up among the bean-baskets, and fell back among the peas. Their shucks felt smooth to his beardless cheek. Like the oblivious lady of his love, he slept—a sleep so deep that he did not even dream of her.

But he was rudely awakened when the wheeled couch on which he had slept so soundly reached its destination. Dragged by the collar from his resting-place, he was propelled by a kick, fortunately not whither he was verbally directed by the irate driver, the snowy purity of whose "turmets" he had stained with his heroic life's blood.

"For thee I have endured all this, cruel Margaret," moaned Jacob, as he stealthily unlocked his master's private door.

He re-locked it, hung up the key where it was wont to hang, and crept to his pallet in the garret.

On his poor bed he flung himself, without disencumbering himself of what was left of his raiment—turned in, as our gallant sailors graphically, although somewhat illogically, express themselves, "all standing."

Again he slept; again he was roughly roused from his slumbers.

Like the oblivious lady of his love, he had overslept himself.

It was his turn to take down the shutters. The spells of Morpheus prevented him from doing so; and Momus, in the form of the foreman, brought him back to consciousness with a shower-bath from a bucket.

Worse still. When he sent up his plate for fried bacon at breakfast, the foreman reminded him that he had already had *cold pig*.

CHAPTER II.

SUSPENSE.

"Hang it all!"—*Old Play.*

THE days went by, but no word came to Jacob from Mistress Margaret. At first he thought that his master looked strangely at him when he came in to business; but this feeling passed, and with a thirsty heart he longed for tidings from the Box.

Whether summoned or not, he felt that he could not much longer refrain from going out to make inquiries, or at least observations; to discover whether, after all the evils which he had experienced from it, hope yet remained for him in the Box, as in Pandora's. He was ever reminded of it.

Mr. Figgins, as has been intimated, was in the habit of supplying his town establishment with produce from his country seat, and at this season his Borough household was liberally supplied with the same. Let us do Figgins justice. He was a free-handed man. Too free, thought his 'prentices, whose ears he smacked without stint.

To return. The eggs and bacon at breakfast, the pork and fowls at dinner, the peas and beans, the cabbages and carrots, the parsley and potatoes, the gooseberries and currants of the week-day puddings, the cherries of the Sunday pie—all these came from the grounds in which Margaret wandered, but from which Jacob had been by Keeper ignominiously expelled.

However, he swallowed his emotions, and with them, sensibly, his full share of the Box's bounteous provender.

CHAPTER III.

THE ISSUE.

"She loves and rides away."

BUT at last Jacob heard from his Margaret again. Once more she sent him a billet by the driver of the cabbage cart—nay, rather, call it cornucopia.

"Jacob," the missive began; no fond "My Jacobus." The artful beauty would not own to the prosaic fact to which we have already alluded, to wit, that she had overslept herself, but laid all the blame for the frustration of the projected interview on Jacob.

He had been too timorous to await her coming, she hinted,—had fled on slight alarm; and that in so clumsy a manner, that her father, enraged at the damage he had done, had been more than ever stern with her, and kept her a close prisoner—all through *him*.

Jacob burst into a flood of bitter tears—a cascade turned into a cataract by his elevated Grecian, *i.e.*, Socratic nose; and beneath his tears he saw his drowning hopes gazing upwards with despairing eyes.

But with his own dim eyes he read on, and soon glowing hope, like a rainbow, spanned his tears. More than one Iris played about the—well, if not tip, the top of his most prominent feature. At one time she had thought of never thinking of him again; but—*but*—BUT—BUT——

She had made all arrangements. At midnight a chaise and four would be waiting within a furlong of the blue back garden gate: nearer the house of her stern parent, vigilant as a spider in the centre of its web, she durst not suffer the equipage to approach. Within it she would await her Jacob's coming; but a few minutes before the clock struck twelve he must be at the back garden gate, to help her maid—who was to be the companion of her flight—carry her boxes to the carriage. She could not flee without her boxes, because they contained her dresses. Abigail could not carry them by herself, and the post-boys could not leave their horses. He, Jacob, only could be trusted.

"You will not fail me, my Jacobus?" was the pathetically-affectionate conclusion of the epistle.

"Fail thee!" exclaimed Jacob, in the garret to which he had retreated to read her letter, dropping upon one knee, and raising both his clasped hands to heaven. "Fail thee, divine darling! And thou hast done all this for me! *I* should have made these preparations for our flight to Paradise!"

Betimes, but not too soon, lest he should awaken suspicion, Jacob arrayed himself in his Sunday clothes. The new breeches which he had ordered in the stead of those which had met with catastrophes had arrived in the nick of time. How he wished that he had ordered an entire new suit! He set out for Camberwell, and reached the blue back garden gate. Abigail, who had begun to fear that he would not come, was so pleased at his arrival that she would fain have embraced him. But Jacob, loyal to the mistress of his heart, chastely refused the proffered salute. Nevertheless, in other respects he was very gallant to Abigail.

He did almost all the carrying of the boxes, and the cording of them on to the back of the carriage. Most gallantly he assisted Abigail into it.

"Put up the steps, my Jacobus!" said the sweet voice he knew so well—heard for the first time that night.

Jacob obeyed; and prepared to leap into the carriage with the alacrity of a lamplighter—in the days in which lamplighters ran up ladders instead of carrying lazy magic wands. But the carriage door was slammed to, and a rough hand thrust him back.

"Thank'ee, lad," said the voice of one of his own sex—a voice gruff indeed, and yet not altogether unkindly. "There's a guinea for thy trouble. Make haste back to the shop, or thou'lt catch it."

The coin was dropped upon the ground.

"Drive on, boys!" shouted the deep voice.

The postboys cracked their whips and started at full gallop.

"Farewell, my Jacobus! Good bye, dear, trustful Jacob!" were the words that came back to our hero, in silvery accents, on the night wind.

It was her last farewell.

By the light of the rising moon he had recognized in the face of the male speaker the features of a young blood whom, more than once before, he had seen, with green eyes of jealousy, in Mistress Margaret's company.

And now, far clearer than the struggling moonshine, the whole truth beamed upon him. He had helped his Beauty—at any rate, her boxes—out of the Box into his rival's arms.

Again he fell upon his knee—his knees—and, raising his frantically-clenched fists towards the between 12 p.m. and 1 a.m. skies, he solemnly swore: "By yon pale orb of night—by moon and star—by cock and pie, and by my mother's grave! I vow that I will be avenged! He, she, hath robbed me of my bride!"

"So *you*'ve been in it!" shouted old Figs, in his night-shirt and slippers, suddenly pouncing on the disconsolate lover, with a horsewhip in his hand. "You've lost your bride—have you? Well, I'll give you a drubbing to make up for her."

And the master cruelly chastised the 'prentice. Had even the faithless Margaret beheld his writhings she must needs have exclaimed in unfeigned compassion, "My poor Jacob!" Then the tyrant haughtily commanded his indentured slave to return to his servitude in Southwark.

Jacob hastened to obey.

Ere he went, however, he picked up the guinea that had been cast him, hissing between his teeth that it should wreak his vengeance.

His intention was to purchase a second-hand blunderbuss, and with it blow out the brains of his Beauty, her bridegroom, her father, her Abigail, and then his own.

But he changed his mind.

For a time his fellow-'prentices taunted him with the cry of "Who carried the boxes from the Box?" But he held his peace; and ere long they wearied of their satire.

Meanwhile and afterwards he practised a revenge more profitable than that which he had at first designed.

Instead of a blunderbuss, he purchased a butterfly net, with which on holidays he haunted the willow groves of the fair Surrey village in which his heart's happiness had been wrecked, capturing specimens of the Camberwell Beauty *(Vanessa antiopa)*, deftly nipping them in the net between the thumb and finger, and selling their fair corpses to the naturalists for sums that kept him comfortably in pocket-money.

Thus did Time prove the Great Consoler.

As Wordsworth beautifully observes—

> "Nature never did betray
> The heart that loved"

to get something out of her of some kind: if not a Camberwell Beauty of one species, then numerous more remunerative specimens of another.

RICHARD ROWE.

NO MORE!

I.

HOW did Love sleep? The sweet moon sailed
In robes of dusky gold last night,
Until her tender glory paled
Before the ruddy dawn of light;
Love lay enshrined in bridal bowers,
And kissed the sweets that come and go
From far-off fields—from all the flowers
That blow.

II.

How did Love wake? The early beams
Had pierced the rose-leaf where he slept,
And rising from his perfumed dreams,
Into the dewy world he leapt.
Singing, soared upward into light—
"For day is but a little pain,
And then 't is night, with soft delight
Again!"

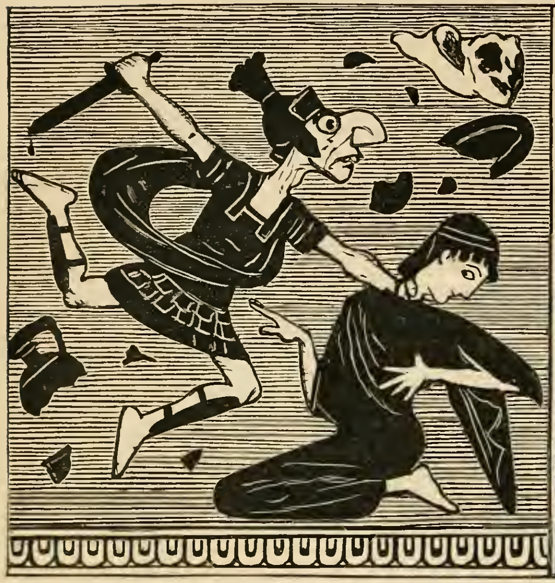
III.

So Love returned when twilight fell,
And found his flowers dying—dead;
The queenly rose he loved so well
Lay in his arms with drooping head.
"Ah, Love!" she cries; "thy kisses burn:
But Death has wooed my lips before;
If Love once flies—he may return
No more!"

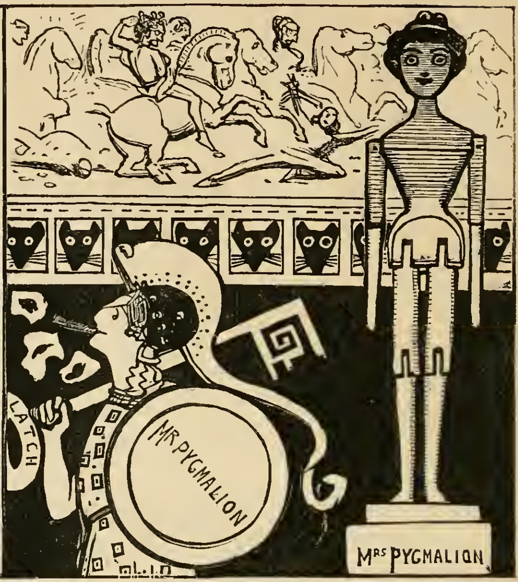
LAUNCE LEE.

ON COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

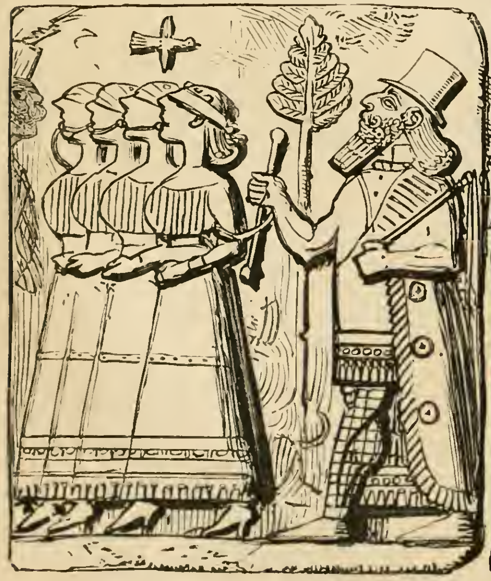
WITH SOME HINTS ON WIFE MANAGEMENT.



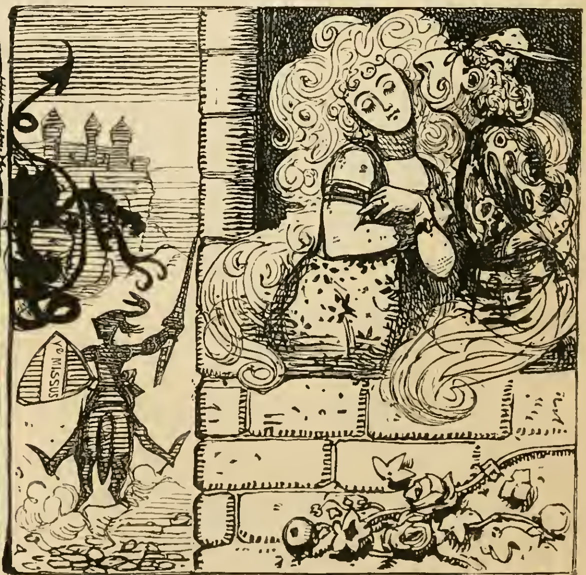
Ancient Roman on hearing that there is cold mutton for dinner.


LATCH
MR PYGMALION
MRS PYGMALION

Greek System—Marry a Statue (Galatea, or any other gal), and warm her up when required. She can be petrified and re-wived *ad libitum*.



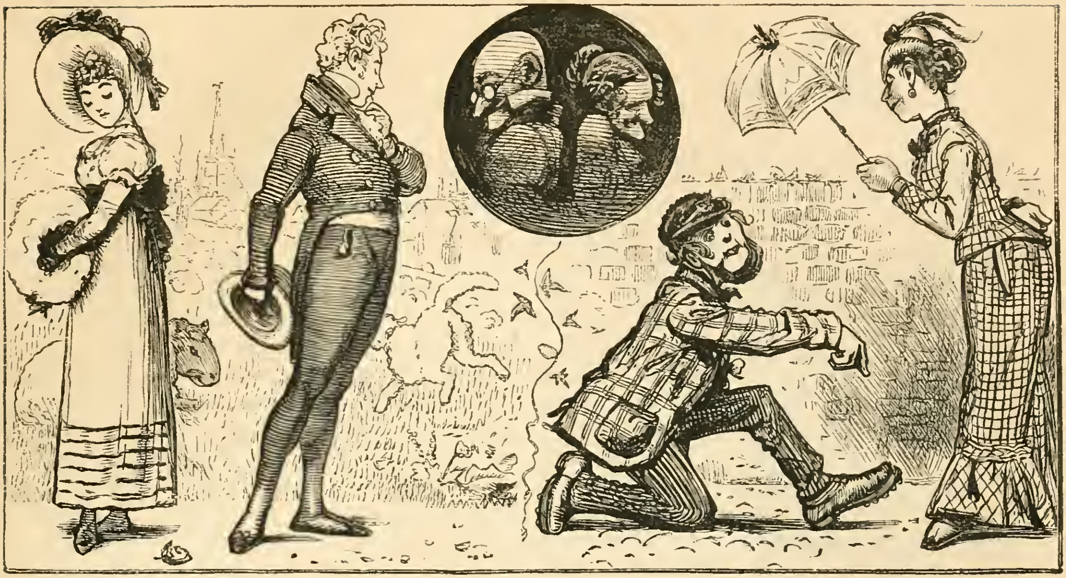
Assyrian Swell taking his wives for a walk in the Park.



Mediæva hubby going to business, and leaving his wife to manage herself

ON COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

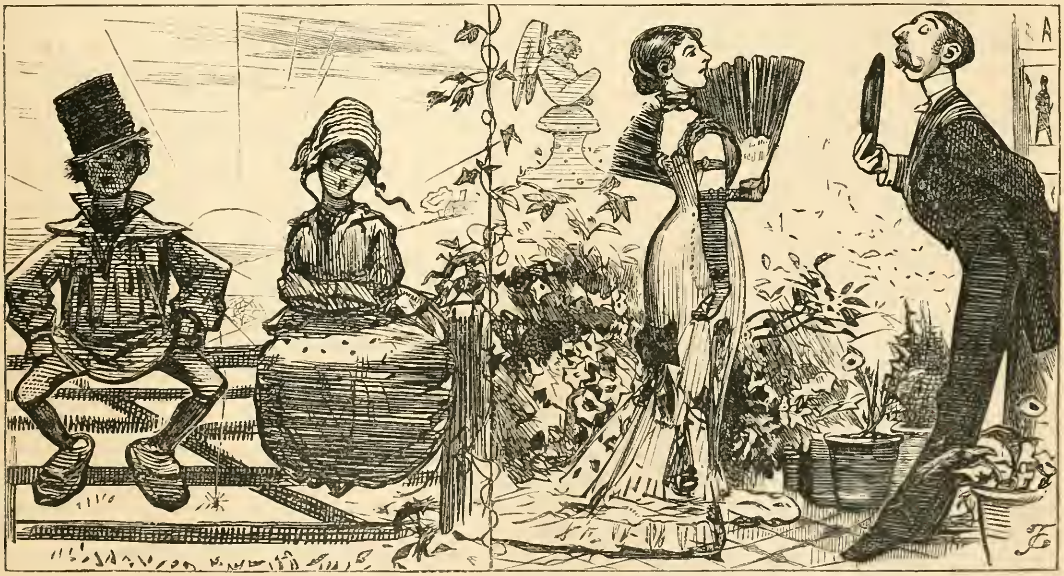
WITH SOME HINTS ON WIFE MANAGEMENT.



Too bashful to reveal their love; they fought like cat and dog after they were married.

Here is another bashful couple. She was a sweet thing of sixteen when he first adored her, and he hopes soon to pluck up courage to propose.

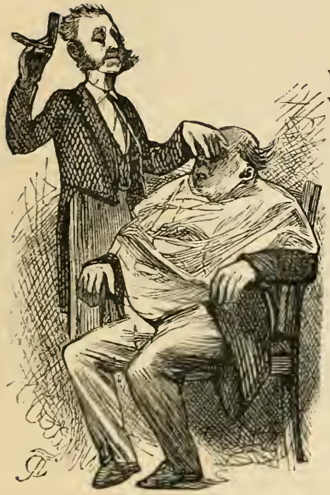
"Oh, Mary Hann! wilt thou be mine? I 'll never use nothing on yer thicker than these 'ere."



Bucolic Courtship. The Silent System.

"Quite too awfully glad, if I may have the pleasure. We can get divorced as soon as you like afterwards, don't you know?"

HOW OLD BUFFLES TRAINED DOWN.



"WANT to get your weight off, old man? very proper too. I 'll tell you what: look at me; you recollect what I was a year or two ago. Not up to your figure exactly, but good for eighteen stone at least. And what am I now? Eleven twelve, sir; nice comfortable weight, enough for any reasonable man. How did I do it? Easiest thing in the world, dear boy: tell you all about it some day, too long now."

"Very—kind—sure. Any—day—half an hour—spare—glad to—see you—crack a bottle - er?" and old Buffles, having laboriously panted out the foregoing disjointed sentence, eked out his meaning with a feeble flourish of his hand, and subsided with an unctuous smile. For Mr. Buffles, I should explain, had lately waxed exceedingly corpulent; so much so, that the slightest exertion or expenditure of breath distressed him greatly.

"Thanks, dear boy. Always happy," said De Creasey cheerfully. "Meantime, instead of telling you the story, I 'm going to do better than that for you. Fact is, you wouldn't believe it, but it 's my butler keeps me under. Invaluable person, regular scientific trainer; just the man for you! I 'm going to lend him to you for a few months, and depend upon it, if you only put yourself in his hands, you 'll be—ah, by Jove! you 'll be able presently to keep up with O'Leary and that sort of fellows for a week or two."

"Oh, lor!" gasped Buffles, and then was heard to murmur, "Thanks—so much—most kind—shure you—but—ah—er—couldn't deprive you—useful—servant. Tell—me—system—try it—self—e—r."

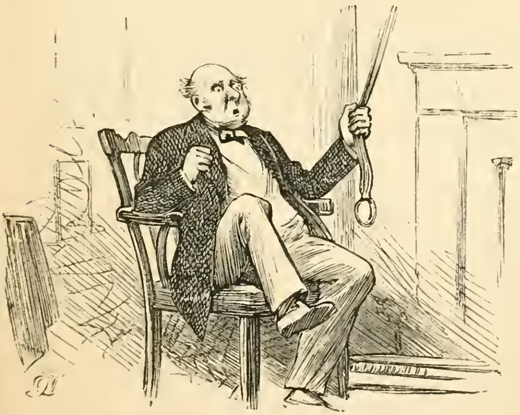
"Don't mention it. Capital fellow: I don't deceive you, I shall miss him much at first, but I want to see if I can't go on without him for a bit; and if I can't, why, I shall know where to find him. I couldn't part with him altogether, but I 'll lend him to you, Buff, my boy; and do you take my advice, and don't bother yourself about his system, but put your own confidently into his hands and leave the rest to him. I 'll send him round to-morrow, and believe me, Buffy, in a week or two you 'll bless the day you saw him."

What could be more generous, more disinterested, and self-sacrificing than this proposal of De Creasey's? What could be plainer than that he was touched by the pitiable condition of his friend, with whose sorrows his own experience taught him to sympathize, and impelled him to this liberal offer for his relief? What could the obese Buffles do but again wheeze out his thanks, and weakly gesticulate his blessing upon the obliging De Creasey?

And when the butler came, and his late master, with the kindest forethought, sent with him his footman and his valet to assist in carrying out the butler's system efficiently—since the butler, as De Creasy explained, could not be constantly overlooking that particular duty—what else could Buffles do but engage the trio of domestics on the spot, and summarily cashier their predecessors? It was done; and although Buffles felt that the force of the De Creaseian charity could no further go, yet when that Samaritan presently sent his cook and his coachman, with the assurance that they were indispensable auxiliaries to the success of the butler's ministrations, Buffles, as well as his obesity would permit, could only bow him to the dispensation, and open his doors and his arms to these messengers of mercy. After this the De Creaseian page, thrown in as a makeweight, was a mere trifle, to which it would have been simply ungrateful and churlish to object; especially as De Creasey was willing to place his housemaid and kitchenmaid at his friend's disposal, but said he thought Buffles would now get along very well, and would soon be sensible of a great reduction in his bulk. It will be seen that De Creasey's ideas of reduction were conceived in a trading spirit, and embraced the commercial principle of taking a quantity; but no one can reasonably contend that this in any way detracted from the excellence of his intentions or depreciated their value.

It would, therefore, have been flying in the face of De Creasey for Buffles to have scorned the sympathies and services of these delegates, particularly as they had not been long established under his roof ere the martyr to adiposity began sensibly to feel the benign effects of their presence.

It was the footman who began the cure. I must premise that the capacious Buffles, although so patiently enduring and mildly melancholy before his friends, was, in his domestic relations, a somewhat testy individual. Indeed, some of his dependants had been heard to say that he was "a deuce of a temper," and others, that when he was in his tantrums, "a wild elephant was a fool to him!" He had occasion very many times a day for the services of the new footman, but that majestic menial did not, on his part, see any occasion for his attendance. If ever there was a man and a servant in a chronic state of stoical unconcern about the wants or wishes of his master, that man was De Creasey's quondam Jeames, now enjoying his ease in Buffles' kitchen, studying his master's "Times," and totally ignoring his master's bell. What time the elephantine Buffles was panting and wheezing, and pishing and pshawing, and regularly wearing himself away in his abortive efforts to win to his side this supine and unsympathetic vassal.



It was too true. Buffles already began to diminish under this harassing irritation alone. Imperceptibly, but surely though slowly, he began to fine and shrink away; and no wonder, you would have said, had you seen him plunging about his apartment, tearing at the bells, flinging open the door to wheeze or whisper stormily downstairs—he couldn't shout for the life of him—and then coming back and plumping doubled up in his chair—a very picture of exploded wrath and *débris* of misery.

But how about the butler? It was his office, we hear the reader complain, to get off Buffles' superfluous weight; not the footman's. Just so; but this being a deliberate kind of person, and deputing his duty in the first instance to his subordinate, we have been obliged to observe first the effect of *his* system.

When the butler, after settling himself comfortably down in his new berth, condescended to interview and inspect his magnified master, it was with a grave but supercilious curiosity, much as if he were some overgrown animal,—in not the primest condition after all,—offered to him on easy enough terms of purchase, of which, however, he didn't quite see the advantages. He prodded and poked the unwieldy gentleman as if he were a prize ox; and having looked him over with mild and well-bred insolence, pronounced that he wanted "tone." It was no use attempting to bring his weight down until his system was thoroughly prepared and fortified to meet the exhaustion consequent upon the reduction. That should be his first care, and he would begin at once; but Mr. Buffles must not calculate upon any sensible effects of this treatment. The effects would be apparent only to the operator, and need be no concern of the patient—indeed, the less the latter knew about what was going on with him, the better. The "toning" and the reduction might be going on together, or alternately, without its being either necessary or competent for the patient to know where one began or the other ended.

So Buffles put himself, meekly and unresistingly, into the butler's hands, with more docility, certainly, than he submitted to the footman's dispensations. I don't know so well how the reduction went on under the butler's treatment, but I 'm clear on the point that this functionary applied himself with much zeal and success to the pleasant task of reducing his master's stock of wines and liqueurs. This would have been all very well if he had permitted their rightful proprietor to share in this exhilarating diversion; but this was the very thing tabooed above all to Buffles. Some wine, of course, was indispensable to the "toning" process, and if you could have had the hardihood, which I wouldn't have envied you, to taste the "mixture" the butler laid down for and presently gave his governor, you would have understood all about the toning and the reduction going on together. Buffles was "toning" down beautifully.

Then there was the coachman. The butler-trainer's system embraced plenty of carriage exercise, and accordingly the devoted patient went out daily, driven by the first-named official. I despair of conveying anything like an adequate idea of the kind of ordeal this was for the unhappy Buffles. Suffice it to say that from the way in which he diminished during the hour or two of anguish while he was at the mercy of the coachman, I should say that Buffles fairly oozed out under the carriage doors. His panels were spitted by omnibus poles, and he himself only escaped skewering in like manner by being projected from the back seat to the front by a vagrant pole entering the vehicle from the rear. His wheels became involved with other wheels, and with tramway rails and other matters, in the most incomprehensible confusion; and it may be fairly calculated that this agony and mortal terror took it out of Buffles in treble the proportion that jockeys are said to lose weight in a strongly-run race. That lasts only for a few minutes, and as Buffles' sweating was protracted into hours, it is easy to conceive the rate at which he wasted. His evaporation went on swimmingly; there is really no other word for it while it is allowable to speak of people being bathed in perspiration.

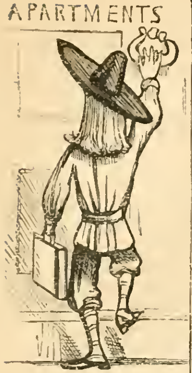
I am half afraid to say anything about the page or the valet. How Buffles sweated and shrank every time he submitted his extensive chin to the razor wielded by the man, and how he subsided like treacle oozing from a leaky can, or foamed and fizzed away like soda-water, under the infliction of the *diablerie* of the boy—to attempt to record this with anything approaching to truthfulness would ruin my credit for ever. I must even fall back upon the cook—no unsubstantial thing to fall upon, even for a Buffles in his pristine portliness; but I cannot venture to say so much for her dishes and *consommés.* Bless you! they were as poor and thin as—as Buffles himself would have been if this sort of thing had gone on much longer.

What he would have come to by this time, or how it would have ended, I 'm sure I couldn't tell you, if, just when he was reduced to a shadow of his former self, and was beginning to wonder what on earth had become of him, or where he had all gone to, Buffles hadn't opportunely woke up from an after-dinner nap, and found himself of the same princely proportions as when he dropped off, but conscious of certain interior sensations that warned him that his repast had not agreed with him so well as usual. But the best of it was that he awoke to the full enjoyment of his own well-appointed and well-ordered household staff, and had never had fathered upon him the worthless minions of a De Creasey—in fact, he had never even heard of that arch-dissembler at all.

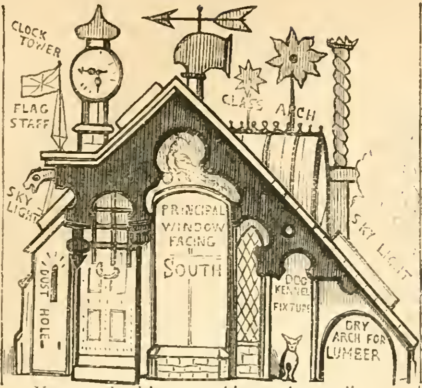
Since then Buffles has gone on making weight as if nothing had happened; and I am afraid, after all, that the title at the head of this paper is a misnomer. But, then, he certainly lost a lot in his dream; so, I think I will let it stand.

H. C. SESSIONS.

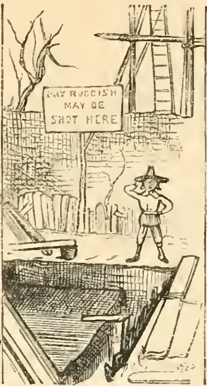
VICISSITUDES OF AN ARTIST'S STUDIO.


APARTMENTS

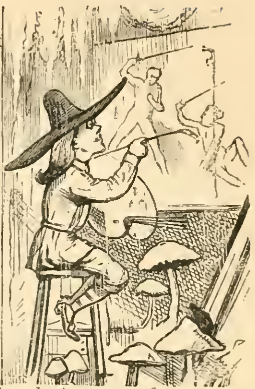
Should you be tired of apartments for your studio, build one of your own.


CLOCK TOWER
FLAG STAFF
SKY LIGHT
GLASS ARCH
PRINCIPAL WINDOW FACING SOUTH
DUST HOLE
DOG KENNEL FIXTURE
DRY ARCH FOR LUMBER
SKY LIGHT

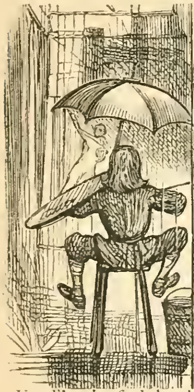
You consult with your architect, who supplies you with something tasty in design, and informs you it will be finished in three months.


DRY RUBBISH MAY BE SHOT HERE

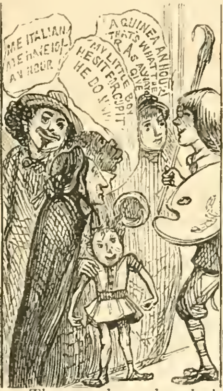
You get married, and go on the Continent; you return;—there has been a strike in the building trade.



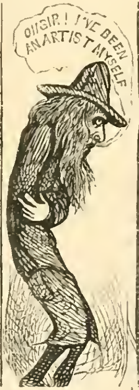
In the fulness of time it is, however, completed; it's a little damp, perhaps, but no matter, it's your own.



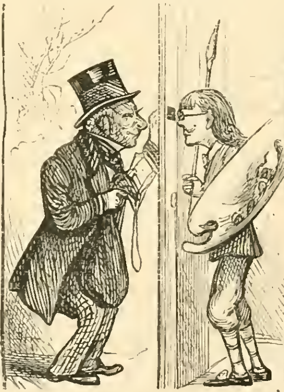
You likewise find the benefit of skylights, when weather sets in.


ME ITALIAN ME HAVE 1S/- AN HOUR
MY LITTLE BOY HE SIT FOR CUPIT HE DO!!!
A GUINEA AN HOUR THAT'S WHAT THE R.A.s ALWAYS GIVE

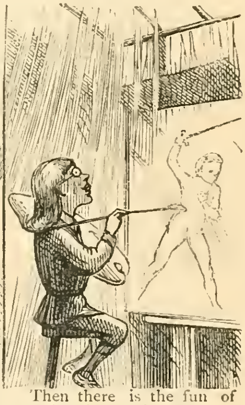
Then you have the advantage of answering your own door, to models—


OH SIR! I'VE BEEN AN ARTIST MYSELF

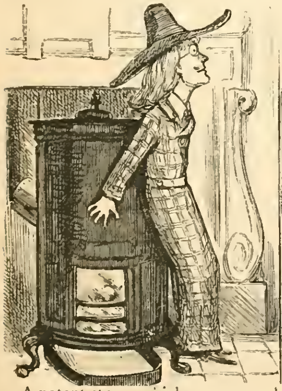
and to beggars,



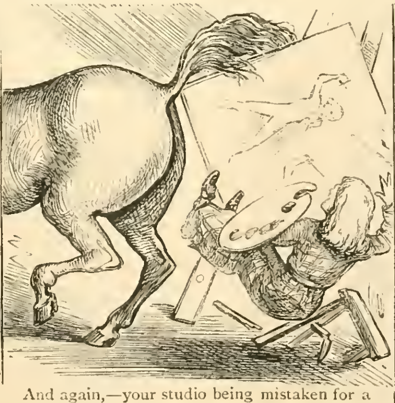
not to mention the Tax-Collector.



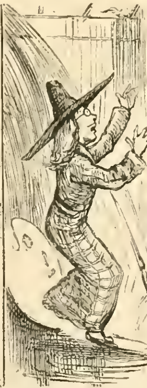
Then there is the fun of working in a forcing-house in summer's scorching rays:



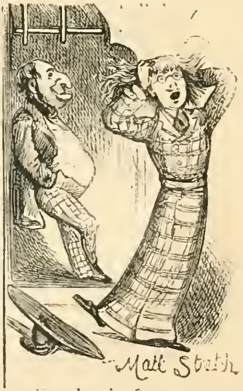
A patent stove, which consumes tons of coal, and throws all its heat up the chimney; keep on your ulster, lean on the stove, and you've not much to complain of.



And again,—your studio being mistaken for a stable varies the monotony of study.



When the thaw sets in, your skylights leak, and your pipes burst,—


Matt Stretch

You let it for a synagogue, and cast yourself once more on the mercy of the world.

LONG-HAIRED LETTICE.

I.

OH, do you know Letitia Lane,
Called likewise Lettice, to her bane;
The girl who had that curious whim
Founded upon a tale in Grimm?

The tale of Lettice with the hair
So long it served instead of stair,
And thus the King's son used to climb
The tower, to court her many a time!

Letitia Lane said to herself,
"I have pomatum on a shelf;
I know a boy whose name is King;
My hair it grows like anything.

"I have explored the neighbourhood,
And found but one King,—which is good;
Because if there is only one,
His son of course is *the* King's son."

She knew her grammar, Lettice did,
She used to learn as she was bid;
She knew the Articles all right,
Definite and Indefinite.

But now, which made her parents stare,
She gave her mind to growing hair;
Her father said, "What can our daughter
Be at with all that rosemary water?"

Alas! the secret soon was out:
Beside her window ran a spout,
And one day they beheld the girl
Measuring what should have been a curl,

And heard this murmur from their pet,
"Not long enough by six feet yet,
But still it makes a nice long shower;
O happy prince, to climb the tower!"

At first they thought it was her fun,
But maids gave notice one by one:
They said, "We cannot stand it, ma'am,
Circassian cream and rosemary balm;

"And hair of this unusual length;
It is too much, ma'am, for our strength."
But soon the parents came to share
Themselves their daughter's pride of hair.

"Lady Godiva had a head
Of long, long hair," the father said.
"And who else had, my dearest life?"
"Boadicea," says the wife:

"There was the beggar maid beside,
Whom King Cophetua made his bride;
Saint Dorothea; Judith. There,
We will not cut Letitia's hair."

II.

NOW, when the girl's hair had run out
The full length of that water-spout,
Letitia took the tale in Grimm
To little King, and showed it him.

Says she, "You see, it all comes right;
My room shall be the Tower of might;
My name is Lettice, my hair is long,
You are the King's son, and are strong.

"You come and sing, 'Let down your hair,
That I may climb without a stair.'
You clutch my locks, and then, oh joy!"
This greatly pleased King's little boy.

One night when it was dark and dense,
He entered by the garden fence,
And underneath Letitia's room
He sang that rhyme amid the gloom.

Letitia said, "Who calls outside?"
"I am the King's son," he replied.
Ten feet of hair she then let down,—
The hair was soft and golden-brown.

And King the younger seized the same,
And pulled and pulled it, as it came;
Letitia sighed, "Oh, oh!" and such;
Her poor eyes watered very much.

The more he pulled the more he hurt,
But Lettice only squeezed her skirt,
Not liking to appeal to him,
Because that was not put in Grimm.

But as he tugged and tugged amain,
At last she could not bear the pain,
And gave ten screeches, loud and clear,
And so the maids ran out to hear;

Likewise the parents, and some friends,
Who rapped the lover's finger-ends,
And did not much attend to him
When he kept saying, "Grimm! Grimm! Grimm!"

For by this time Letitia Lane
Was almost fainting with the pain,
And two policemen, loud and large,
With bullseyes, asked, "What is the charge?"

Of course the friends hushed up the case,
Because they dreaded the disgrace;
But poor Letitia, pale of cheek,
She had her hair cut that day week.

And *now* the parents keep an eye
Upon the children's library;
Admitting science, psalm, and hymn,
But angrily excluding Grimm.

AUTHOR OF "LILLIPUT LEVEE."

◆

FIRST APPEARANCE OF JOHN JONES, COMEDIAN.

TO quote the words of several competent judges (notably my good mother and the family nurse), I was a born actor.

From the moment of my entrance upon the Stage of Life, I indulged in tricks and conceits rarely met with on this side of the footlights, my antics being so eccentric that they invariably provoked the remark that "it was as good as a pantomime to see me."

At the age of seven I was a perfect master of Skelt's Acting Drama (the penny plain and twopence coloured arrangement), and before I was seventeen had trod the boards of the amateur Electric Theatre, and enacted the part of *Horatio* in consideration of the payment of five shillings in advance, fully believing that this character was *below* my genius, but knowing that the assumption of the Prince of Denmark was considerably *above* my means, the fee for murdering *Hamlet* being two pounds at the very least.

Thus step by step my passion for the stage and its attractive surroundings had increased, till finally I became a positive slave to Thespis, and had no delight in anything or anybody unconnected with the "profession."

My frequent performances at the "Electric" were crowned with the most flattering success, the applause of my friends (?) on each occasion being so overwhelming as to leave no doubt in my mind that, could I but obtain an appearance, my fortune would be made, and the dream of my life realized. Thus imbued, I set to work and plotted and schemed from morn till night to secure my desired *début*, and at length succeeded in obtaining an introduction to a well-known tragedian, Mr. Mortimer Montmorency, then "starring" at the Theatre Royal Cottingham.

The interview was satisfactory in the extrême: the great man being so pleased with my appearance and manners, that he determined to secure my services at once, to support him in small but important parts, at a correspondingly trivial salary. Here was joy indeed! It really seemed too good to be true; but all doubt was removed when the man of many parts bade me be present the following morning at the eleven o'clock rehearsal, adding, "By-the-bye, will you play under your own name, Mr. Jones, or will you have a *nom de plume?*" "Oh, no! I must have a *nom de plume*," I replied; "I cannot play under the name of John Jones for family reasons. Mr. Herbert Granville," I added, "would suit me, if there were no objections." "Certainly," acquiesced my patron, "Mr. Herbert Granville be it."

The play selected for my first appearance was "Richard III.," and the character with which I was to be entrusted was a "Flying Messenger," who is supposed to rush on to the battle-field and announce that "A gentleman, who calls himself Stanley, desires admission to the Earl of Richmond!" having repeated which sentence several times to the satisfaction of the stage manager, I was pronounced "all right," and rehearsal was at an end.

It must be admitted that it was galling in the extreme for one who had revelled in *Claude Melnotte* and *Romeo* to be ignominiously destined to speak one solitary line. However, there was no help for it now, and the only thing to be done was to try and deliver my words in such a manner as to astonish, if possible, the manager and audience, which I determined to do, and spent the whole of the afternoon in practising my speech and studying the effect I desired to produce.

The visions I had originally pictured of my opening night—vainly imagining myself the hero of the hour—were somewhat rudely dispelled when I reached the theatre in the evening, and found myself unnoticed and uncared for, and my courage—which had been so grand in the morning—followed the example of the redoubtable Bob Acres, and "considerably oozed out."

As the hour approached for me to go on—time after time did I return from the stage to the dressing-room to have yet another look at my warlike appearance. I have a distinct remembrance of getting in everybody's way on this eventful night, and being the recipient of many a strangely-sounding blessing, which increased the nervousness that had now strongly set in.

I can hardly fancy a more intensely wretched feeling than that which took possession of me at this time, while waiting for my cue—an empty, sinking sort of sensation, as though I had nothing in me—an expression which might have been very truthfully applied to my acting capabilities. How I longed for my time to come! or, rather, how I longed for it to have gone! and what would I not have given to have been released from my responsibility?

Over and over again did I bother the prompter to know whether it was near my time—fearful lest I might not hear my cue. In fact, such a nuisance had I made myself to that necessary but much-abused worthy, that in despair he besought me to get anywhere out of his way; which request I complied with by getting to the extreme back of the stage at the very moment I was wanted, from which place of retirement I was seized by him and literally pushed on, in anything but a dignified manner.

My memory does not serve me sufficiently to recount from personal recollection how I disported myself during the short time that I had possession of the stage, but those who were present on the memorable night affirm that they can never forget it. According to all accounts, my nerve must have entirely forsaken me; for, instead of rushing on in a state of wild excitement, which would have become the scene, I walked quietly up to Richmond, and, being short-sighted, eyed him up and down, as though to make sure I was addressing the right man, and then drawled out in the slowest and swellest of accents, "A gentleman—who calls himself Stanley—desires admission—to the—Earl of Richmond." Thus carrying out my idea of astonishing the manager and audience, though hardly in the way that I originally purposed.

What the audience thought of my *fiasco* I know not, but what Mr. Montmorency said I remember very distinctly; it was this:

"Granville, I love thee, but never more be officer of mine;" after which short but characteristic dismissal, he placed his hand kindly on my shoulder and said, "Never mind, my boy, it might have been worse; for I remember once, when playing *Hamlet* one night, being completely nonplussed by the *Rosencrantz* of the evening. It was in the second scene of the second act, which should be as follows:

"'*Hamlet.* What news?'

"'*Rosencrantz.* None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.'

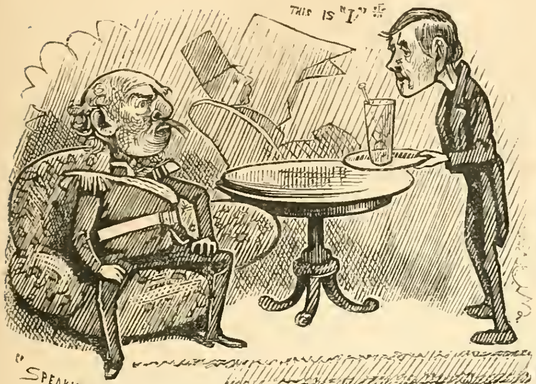
"'*Hamlet.* Then is doomsday near."

"Instead of which, after my inquiry, 'What news?' the playful Rosencrantz replied, 'None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest *and doomsday is near.*'"

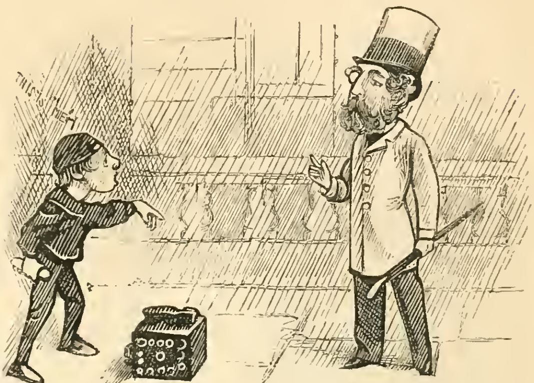
H. G. SOMERVILLE.

THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG.

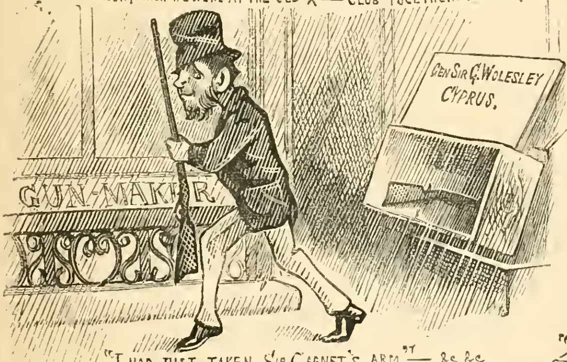
(BEING SOME EXTRACTS FROM A "SOCIETY" JOURNAL; WITH EXPLANATORY ILLUSTRATIONS.)



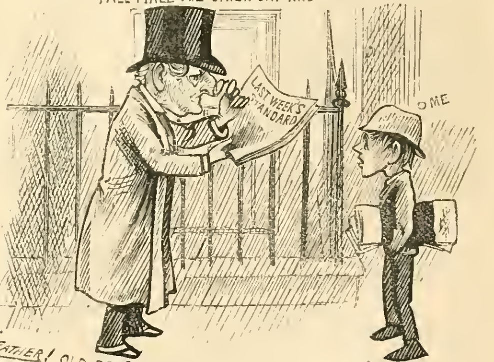
"SPEAKING OF POOR OLD GENERAL SIR A.B — ("OLD BEN" WE USED TO CALL HIM) I* REMEMBER, WHEN WE WERE AT THE OLD X — CLUB TOGETHER. HE &c &c



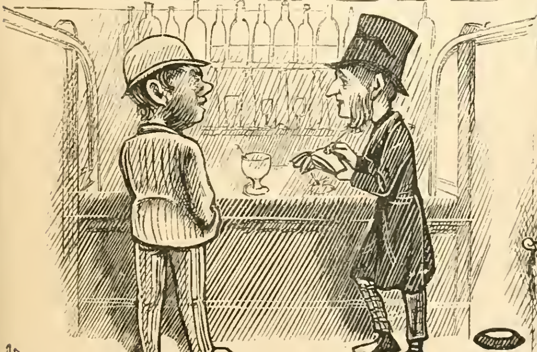
"TERRIBLY FAT HIS GRACE OF C — GETS, BY THE WAY; HE CAME UP TO ME † IN PALL MALL THE OTHER DAY AND" — &c &c


GUN-MAKER
GEN SIR G. WOLESLEY
CYPRUS.

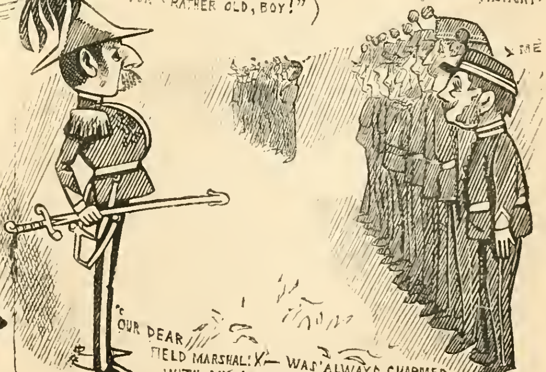
"I HAD JUST TAKEN SIR GARNET'S ARM"† — &c &c


LAST WEEK'S STANDARD
ME

"RATHER! OLD BOY" SAID HIS LORDSHIP TO ME° (LITTLE MISPRINT: FOR "RATHER OLD, BOY!")



"POOR DEAR OLD TIM" — AS WE ALWAYS CALLED THE LITTLE MARQUIS IN OUR SET — TIM (HAD A BUTLER WHO) WAS ALWAYS A GREAT CRONY OF MINE"

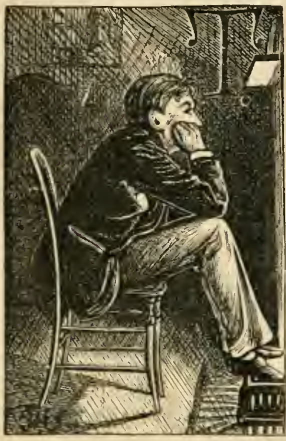


"OUR DEAR FIELD MARSHAL: X— WAS ALWAYS CHARMED WITH MY COMPANY"

A BREACH OF PROMISE.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

IN WHICH OUR HERO "HAS IT" AT LAST.



TUDWAY GREEN "had it" at last!

Many a long year had he been struggling for it—now toiling a long way behind it, now having it almost within his grasp, again losing sight of it altogether; but, never daunted and always pressing onward with renewed vigour after each defeat, until now he really "had it" at last.

Tudway had been a discontented man—unreasonably discontented, his friends thought. He had (said they) everything a man could desire—a large estate, an ample income, a splendid cellar, a magnificent cook, a perfect digestion, a beautiful face and form——no! even the most sycophantic of his friends couldn't credit him with a beautiful face and form. The politest of them thought that his eyes "might have been a leetle more—eh?" "His back, perhaps—?" and his hair "Just a shade or two—um!—don't you think so?" But I won't dwell upon these matters, as Tudway may see this, and I have no desire to wound his feelings. We all regard our imperfections through a diminishing-glass, as it were, and persuade ourselves the world does the same, so I dare say Tudway calls his outrageous squint "a slight cast," considers his hair "a sort of a pale auburn," and supposes his hump imperceptible "unless he stands sideways." Such moral blindness is a wise dispensation—how would some of us bear our own hideousness else? I speak feelingly on this point. But I am wandering away from what was considered Tudway's crowning reason for satisfaction with his lot. He was engaged to be married to the young, witty, beautiful, and accomplished Miss Kitty Pyrke.

I am not going out of my way to describe Miss Pyrke in detail. I've given her four decently comprehensive adjectives, and no young lady, however exacting, could expect more. Enough that she was beloved by Tudway, and, doubtless, in return loved—his riches. She *may* have loved his person, and yet—but who can fathom a woman's fancy?

Still, even his love was subordinate to his one unsatisfied longing, the cause of his discontent. This misguided young man, rolling in riches and destitute of poor relations, yearned for fame—literary fame! He had no desire, mind you, to "wing a lofty flight" (this has the ring of a quotation, so I have placed it in inverted commas; but I believe I have invented the phrase myself, all the same); he merely aspired to the position of a comic writer. He was considered by himself and friends to be "awfully funny," and they all said he ought to "get on" a comic paper. To do him justice, he tried hard; but editor after editor politely declined his productions, even when he offered them for nothing. Meantime, he utilized all his "good things" in letters to his friends, and the more "comicalities" he sent them, the more they wished him on a "comic." Naturally his "best things" found their way into his Kitty's letters, but all this brought him no nearer his desire. He could have printed at his own expense, of course, but that was not what he wished; he wanted his things to appear in some periodical where the public would be bound to see them—they might ignore a book—and he had tried every paper he knew of without success, so he was in despair.

But the tide had turned at last. Sitting over his study fire this evening, and brooding over his ill success, a sudden thought darted through his brain, and electrified him. Starting to his feet, he slapped his thigh joyously, and exclaimed, "*I* have it!"

Then, with a happy light in his eye, and a merry chuckle—where should a chuckle be? at the root of his tongue? Well, say at the root of his tongue—he put on his hat and sought Miss Kitty's abode.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

THE PLAN.

MISS PYRKE resided, with her papa and sisters, in a new house in that district of London which unblushingly calls itself "West Kensington," although "Hammersmith" is written in every feature of its face as plainly as ever Bill was in those of Mrs. Wititterley's page, hight Adolphus. However, this pleases Hammersmith, I suppose, and doesn't hurt Kensington, so there is no more to be said on that point.

Tudway, on his arrival, made straight for the room in which his Kitty was usually to be found—and he found her. He wasn't quite satisfied with the state of affairs, however, but it was not his usual time for calling, and if lovers will call at unusual times, they must take the consequences. Still, he thought he had grounds for complaint. He wouldn't have objected to finding her surrounded by the family, neither would he have objected to finding her alone; but she was pursuing a middle course, of which he didn't quite approve. She was very nearly alone, but not sufficiently so. Of course he didn't doubt her, but he thought her one companion too young and too male, and they might just as well have had the gas alight, then he could have been *quite* certain whether it was a knee his Kitty started from, or only the sofa. He was too excited with his new idea, however, to do more than make a mental note of the circumstance for future comment, so as soon as the young man (he was plaguy good-looking, confound him!) had slunk away, and Kitty had lit the gas (for which he couldn't see the necessity *now*), he said,

"I say, Kitty, do you object to my jilting you?"

Now, why Miss Pyrke should get red and confused, and assume the expression of one about to vehemently assert her innocence, passes my comprehension. Tudway didn't notice it, however, but went on.

"Because I've got such a splendid idea. You know how I'm always yearning for fame? Well, look here: suppose I write to you and break off our engagement — you bring action for breach — my letters, with all those funny things in them, read in court—printed in *all* the papers—roars of laughter—publicity—fame—happiness! You and I make it all right afterwards, of course."

After all, there is no doubt she must have been fond of him: her eyes sparkled with delight as he unfolded his plan; at last he would be happy—she was thinking of that, no doubt. She grew nearly as excited as he was, and gave his scheme her unqualified approval.

"Go home, there's a dear boy, and write me the letter at once. And I say, Tuddy," she called after him as he hurried down the front steps, "I'll go in for immense damages—for fun."

"Bless her heart!" cried Tudway, as he trotted off, "how she enters into the thing!"

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE RESULT.

THE contract thus entered into was faithfully carried out. The next morning Miss Pyrke received the following note:—

MY DEAR MISS PYRKE,—I have just decided never to marry. I therefore beg to release you from your engagement. I shall be glad if you will retain my presents, but please return engagement ring by bearer, as it may be useful, should I again alter my intentions. I am, yours cheerfully,

TUDWAY GREEN.

Upon this Miss Pyrke promptly brought her action, laying the damages at £100,000. The case was "set down for trial," and in due course came before a judge and two rows of enlightened jury.

Tudway was mightily amused with the whole thing.

Knowing it to be a sham, he found something irresistibly comic in the grave severity of the judge and the shocked expression of the jury as the counsel for the plaintiff opened the case, describing him (Tudway) as a "mouthing Mephistopheles, inebriated with the exuberance of his own callosity, and disturbing the pure waters of a budding consciousness with the insidious insincerities of a fictitious affection," and detailing the "whole course of love" from the first "slight attentions" through the proposal scene (which he described with surprising accuracy, Tudway thought) and long correspondence, until the climax was reached in "this heartless—this *gross*—this FIENDISH letter."

Oh, it was a rich joke! Tudway thought; a rare joke—perhaps the best he had ever made. He tried to catch Kitty's eye in a telegraphic glance of intelligence as she entered the box, but she kept them both cast down, and gave her evidence with a quiet self-possession which elicited a compliment from the learned judge (what an eye for beauty they have, those old fellows!) and nearly sent Tudway into a fit.

"How well she does it!" he said to himself with intense enjoyment. "Oh, dear! oh, dear! This day will be the death of me."

His own conduct in the box, however, in consequence of his struggles to retain his gravity, drew forth anything but compliments, the judge characterizing it as "disgusting flippancy," and threatening to commit him; while the plaintiff's counsel described it as "consistently brutal."

But now they reached the point to which Tudway looked forward with such hopes. The counsel lifted the first of his letters, and asked, "Is this your handwriting, sir?" The reply being in the affirmative, the clerk proceeded to read it. "Now," thought our friend, "for a sensation;" and he prepared himself for the look of surprise, the pleased smile, and the final roar of laughter each of his witticisms was to draw forth. But there seemed to be something wrong; the letter was read calmly through—not a smile was visible! Could they have heard it? The judge was quietly taking notes; the jury sat attentive, but solemn. Tudway couldn't understand it. The second letter made no better impression than the first, nor did the third, except that the judge asking an explanation of a passage containing one of his "best things," and receiving it, remarked contemptuously, "Oh, some stupid joke!" He grew bewildered, his laughter all died out of him, and he answered the rest of the questions put to him like one in a dream. Like one in a dream he heard the judge sum up, the jury give a verdict for the plaintiff—without leaving the box—and for the whole damages claimed. Like one in a dream he heard the judge deliver a long lecture on his "dastardly conduct," and pronounce "judgment accordingly, with costs." His consciousness was benumbed to everything but a sense of gigantic failure; his last hope had left him, and fame was never to be his. Sad and sorrowful he sought the presence of the late plaintiff.

"Kitty," he said, sadly, "I have not treated you well. I have been wrong all along. I have wasted time that should have been devoted to you in the pursuit of a chimera—an *ignis fatuus*—a will-o'-the-wisp. But I have received a lesson: from this moment I give up fame and devote my life to your happiness. Let us be married to-morrow."

But she received his advances coldly.

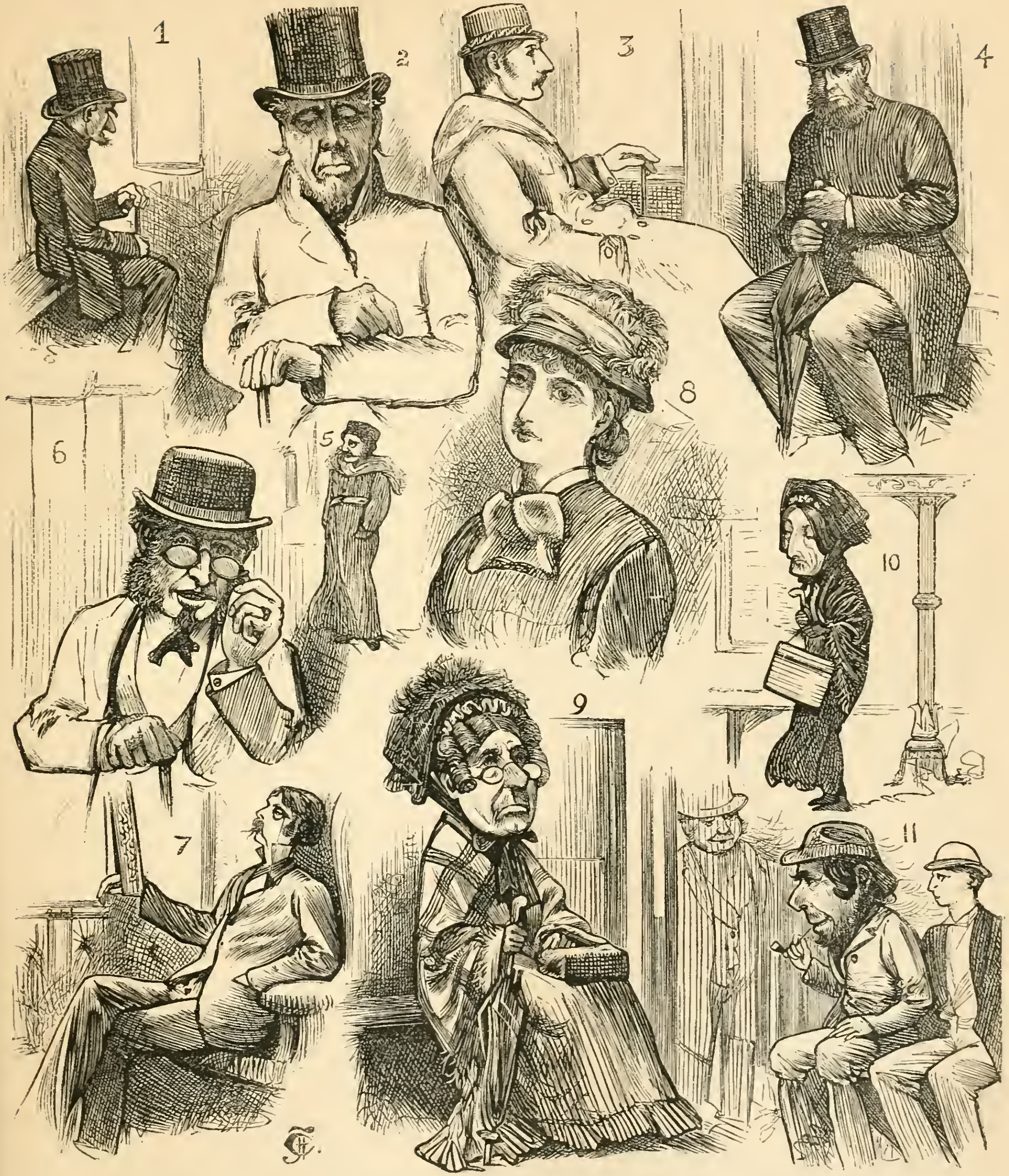
"No, Mr. Green," she replied; "you have jilted me cruelly—shamefully. I didn't know how cruelly and shamefully until his lordship made that beautiful speech. We meet no more. I go to wed another—the young man you surprised me with the other night, in point of fact—we are going to set up on this hundred thousand pounds."

And she left him.

I don't think I can do justice to the rest of Tudway's career.

JOHN W. HOUGHTON.

SOME RAILWAY PASSENGERS.



1. The Man who never travelled in a train before.
2. The Old Party who wants the window shut.
3. The Young Party who wants it open.
4. The Man who always finds a corner with his back to the engine.
5. The *Habitué*.
6. The Man who can afford first-class, but always travels third.
7. The Man who can only afford third, but always goes first-class.
8. The Young Lady who doesn't mind the smoke in the least.
9. The Old Lady who does.
10. The Old Woman that always gets in the wrong train.
11. The Man who always invites a very stout party into a very full carriage, with the remark that there is plenty of room for a little 'un.

A FELINE TRIAL.

"DON'T stand staring in that imbecile way, my good man," said the magistrate; "you hear what the complainant says."

"Yes, sir,—yes, your Worship, I mean; but——"

"Yes, yes, yes! you have said that before," he cried, and he brought his hand down so viciously on his desk that the perspiration stood in bigger drops than ever upon my head and brow, tickling me horribly as several of the drops got married, and joining themselves into streams, ran down my nose and behind my ears.

It was very dreadful, and I was so innocent, and somehow people would titter, and I could see a dreadful little man of a plump and rosy aspect in the reporter's box, smiling as he watched me through a pair of the shiniest spectacles I ever saw, and every now and then, after making notes, he kept staring at me as if he were learning me by heart.

Once or twice he turned and whispered to a fair young man beside him in the box, and he whispered back, and blinked rapidly, and made his fair hair stick up all over his head, as he, too, watched me through another pair of dreadfully shiny spectacles; and he also seemed to be learning me by heart; and what's more, just as I was making up my mind to deliver a very powerful bit of defence, this dreadful young man smiled, made his spectacles glimmer, and then seemed to play a tune on the piano about me, all over the front of the reporters' box, with fingers that looked like a phantom *cheveaux de frise* in rapid motion.

It was those two reporters at that dreadful police court at Bow Street that upset me, so that I could do nothing but perspire, till my clean collar was quite limp, and I did nothing at last but gasp like a gold-fish in a globe.

"You see, sir," said the solicitor, smiling, "there is nothing to be got out of the defendant. As my client the complainant instructs me, this man is a stubborn kind of personage, with a craze for cats, and the neighbourhood has become of late perfectly unbearable."

"With the nocturnal nightingales' notes?" said the magistrate, smiling.

"Exactly so, sir; ha, ha, ha! very good. Excuse my laughing, your Worship," cried the solicitor, wiping his eyes, while all the people tittered; somebody called out "Silence!" very mildly; and that plump little man bent over his book, and I am sure, from the way his spectacles twinkled, he wrote down the words, "Roars of laughter."

"My client, sir, asks for nothing unreasonable; only that, say, fifty of the cats may be destroyed."

"Roars of laughter" written down again, and the demon young man with the straight-up hair played a flourish with one hand, and brought down his other as if playing a big chord.

"There—there are only nineteen!" I cried at last, for I was so exasperated that I was obliged to speak.

"Oh! only nineteen, Mr.—Mr.——" said the magistrate, referring to the charge-sheet before him.

"Yes, your Worship: nineteen, including the kittens," I said, wiping my face.

"Roars of laughter" written down again, and I felt as if I must throw something at the little man, and something else at his son.

"Well, but, my good man," said the magistrate, now speaking blandly, "don't you think you can abate this nuisance? Cats are very well in their places, but nineteen or ninety-nine are too many to make the vicinity pleasant for your neighbours."

"My client advises me, sir," interposed the solicitor, "that there has been quite a plague of cats for the past twelvemonth."

"Yes, yes, yes! so I have heard," said the magistrate, testily. Then turning to me, "Now, this is a nuisance that I must leave to your common sense to abate. I shall dismiss the case on your promise to get rid of the animals and not annoy your neighbours any more. If you do not, proceedings will doubtless be taken against you by the local authorities. Stand down. Call the next case."

"But—but—but, your Worship," I exclaimed.

"Stand down, sir! The next case!" said the magistrate; and I was hustled out of the box where I had been standing, and hurried out of the court amidst a burst of titters, while one ribald wretch said, "*Miaou!*"

Some one else said "Miaou!" outside, and the policemen laughed so, that it was with a feeling of mental agony that I leaped into the first hansom cab—stay, I will be accurate: I never leap now—and sank back exhausted.

"Where to, sir?" cried the cabman.

"Cats, my man, cats," I said, feebly.

"Where, sir?"

"Cats—I mean Forty-seven Raven Street, Strand."

Judith opened the door to me, and about seven cats began to rub their heads against my legs as soon as I was on the mat, but I had not the heart to kick them, and hurrying into my room, I sat down to wonder how I was to abate the nuisance.

I gazed into the garden, once so neat and pretty, though certainly peppered with soot, but always cheery with its ferns and the little fountain; now it was scratched by cats and besprinkled with broken missiles that had been thrown from neighbouring windows. In these few square feet you could see three old, very old, boots; a worn-out hair-brush; the *débris* of a washhand-jug—blue Sophonisba pattern; two halves of the lid of a tooth-brush tray; some dry pieces of soap—sizes various; a slipper; the bare stump of a shaving-brush; half a scuttle, at least, of nubbly coals; some pieces of tile; twice as many scraps of slate; a broken broom-handle; the foot of a rummer—the top being in splinters too small to count; the remains of several hot water-jugs; dozens of medicine bottles; many pomatum-pots, and their lids; half a brick; two old hats—chimneypots, which was probably why they were thrown; a Bradshaw's Guide, in a very wet and sodden condition; a thin old bent poker; the pan of a fire-shovel; a tin shaving-pot; a small flat bachelor's kettle; a French roll, that had swollen horribly since it lay there; a champagne-bottle, three hocks, and about nine of the small cheap shilling clarets; a half-quartern cottage loaf, in as bad a state as the roll; while the blank wall was all over dabs of putty, that had flattened there consequent upon the young solicitors at forty-five making practice at the cats with a long blow-pipe.

These are a few of the articles with which the furry creatures had been pelted; and while my neighbours reviled me about the matter, I hasten to place myself right with the public, and to say that it was not my fault, for I did not like to keep the cats at all, but they would not go.

I lit a pipe, and mused—please mark, good reader, I do not try to make a pun (*muse—mews*) out of that word, like some ribald writers—and just then Judith entered the room.

"What would you like for dinner to-day, sir?"

"Cats," I said, absently.

"Lor bless the man! what's come to him?" she muttered. "I said, what would you like for dinner to-day, sir?"

"Dinner? oh, anything, Judith."

"Please, sir, I forgot to tell you when you was going out, that the big tortoiseshell had kittens in the waste paper-basket in the night—nine of 'em, sir. I never see such a litter afore!"

"Nine more!" I groaned: "then there are twenty-eight. But which big tortoiseshell—that one Jeremy's asked me to take care of while they went to the Isle of Wight?"

"Yes, sir."

"And it has only been here a week!" I moaned feebly, as I followed Judith into the front room, where, as soon as I entered, the tortoiseshell Tom—no, stay; I am so confused with that police court bullying and those two reporters, that I hardly know what I say: it couldn't have been a Tom, of course; I might have known that, as tortoiseshell Toms are so rare—the tortoiseshell Tibby began to purr; and as I sat myself down, manufacturing dire plots for the destruction of her offspring, if she did not come and rub herself against my legs, and then go back to the waste paper-basket, and take hold one by one, by the skin at the back of their necks, of the nine little faintly-squeaking kittens, with their blind slits of eyes and scrubs of tails, and lay them at my feet, giving each one a lick as she did so; and when she had got them all in a heap, if she did not look up at me and seem to say,

"There! wouldn't you be proud if you had nine kittens?"

Now, here is the way it began: I am a mildly-disposed bachelor, nearly fifty, and live alone, saving my servants, in one of the quietest streets in town; and because one day I was at a friend's, and stroked and admired a fine white cat with blue eyes, of which he was very proud—it seemed for no other reason than that it was as deaf as a post—he sent it to me next day as a present.

The very next week, another friend, who had been to my house in the interim and seen the white cat, said, "I say, old fellow, you're fond of cats. You shall have the big old Tom."

I protested that I would not rob him for worlds; but he insisted on being robbed.

"He's the heaviest Tom in London," he said; and, in spite of all, he weighted me with that cat.

Then, like the wind, it was set about that I—Birley—Christopher Birley—was fond of cats; and Mrs. Martin came over one day with something in a basket, and said that they were going to live in the country, where they would have no use for a cat; so, as I was so fond of them, and would be so kind to it, she had brought me her Cleopatra.

I couldn't help myself—I was obliged to take it; and then, at a horrible rate, people brought me their cats to take care of while they went for their autumn trips; and, when I objected, it was always, "Oh! it's only one more, and you won't notice it!" or, "I wouldn't trouble you, Mr. Birley, but people are so cruel, and I don't think it's right to go away and lock up one's house with the cat left in it to starve."

And that was not the worst of it: the cats themselves got to know of it; and they came from far enough and settled themselves upon my establishment, walking in at back door or open window, or coming down through the pavement with the coals, if there was no other part open, so as to get into what they evidently looked upon as a kind of a Cat Paradise. One great black fellow broke an attic window to come in, and another black and white came down the chimney; so that at the end of a year I really believe there were seventy cats in the house, and the people around said I was mad. I couldn't go out without some ribald boy shouting "'scat 'scat!" and the neighbours began to complain.

And now all this had resulted in my being summoned to Bow Street for causing a nuisance in the neighbourhood—just, too, when, by some series of fatalities, numbers of the cats had died, and I had filled the back garden so full that I did not know where to bury the rest.

There was nothing for it but to obey, so I took Judith into my confidence.

"Well, sir," she said, "there are certainly a few too many, but don't go pisoning the poor things—it makes 'em that ill that I can't abear to see 'em."

"Oh, no, certainly not," I said, with a shudder, for I saw in imagination a series of poisoned cats haunting me, and yelling 'Murderer!' "But don't you think, Judith, we might—er—em—er—consign that litter to a—er—em—a watery grave?"

"Drownd 'em in the pail, sir? Well, yes, that would be nine the less."

So we settled that we would begin with these nine, but not in broad daylight. A deed so dark needed the flavour of night, so at the witching hour of nine I tucked up my sleeves, and coaxing Tibby into the back room with a bit of meat, I shut her in, and, taking the nine infant cats, like a middle-aged Herod as I was, I bore them in the basket down below.

Judith was already filling a pail at the tap in the back kitchen, and this half full she set down in the middle of the floor and then looked at me.

"Hadn't you better empty them all in at once, Judith?" I said, hesitating, as I looked up at her from the helpless progeny of the mother cat.

"Me—me put 'em in, sir!" she stammered. "I thought you'd like to do that."

"Er—er—no, Judith," I replied. "I have brought them down, you must commit the mur——I mean drown them."

"Lor-a-mussy, sir, no, I couldn't do it! can't abear even to kill a fle——I mean fly."

"Suppose," I said, with a brilliant idea flashing through my mind, "suppose we both take the basket and empty them in?"

"Well, we might do that, sir," she said, unwillingly.

And we did : literally pouring the nine furry babes, as they feebly squealed a protest, into the pail.

"Miaou !" said a cat just then ; and, starting in horror, there stood twelve cats, like a jury of the kittens' countrymen, come to sit in inquest upon the little bodies ; and, directly after, in came Tibby herself, looking wide-eyed and wondering, to scamper round the kitchen, and then look up at me as if to say, "Where are my bairns ?"

It was too much for the feelings of both Judith and myself, and kneeling down, we picked the nine kittens out of the pail, and began to wipe them, efforts ably seconded by Tibby with her tongue, while, as she finished them, she carried them off one by one and dropped them into the basket.

The wiping of those kittens took some time, and evidently afforded a good deal of satisfaction to the cats, with which the back kitchen was now pretty well filled—a satisfaction which they evinced by rubbing their sides against my legs, and then commencing with one ear, pushing their bodies right along to the root of their tails, turning round and repeating the action on the other side. As I had only two legs, and the rubbing process had to be gone through by fifteen cats and kittens at once, some availed themselves of the corner of the sink, others of the wash-stool, while others again tried the pail, and got horribly in the way.

The little kittens seemed none the worse for their immersion, and it was with a sigh of relief that I saw them snugly settled amongst their mother's fur. So, rising from my knees, I walked upstairs, followed by a procession of cats, to my study, where the first of the party placed himself on my knees, another leaped to the back of the easy chair, two more settled themselves on the arms, and the others found comfortable places about the room.

I had come upstairs to place myself face to face with my difficulty ; but I ask an enlightened public how it was possible for me, a quiet, modest, easy-tempered man, to sit there and plot the destruction of a set of animals who, one and all, placed the most implicit confidence in me, and in their smooth, purring way, seemed to say, "All right, old fellow, you won't hurt us !"

I aroused myself, and as it was a most suitable time for such a business, I rang for my big fishing-creel, persuaded Joseph, one of the biggest Toms, to go in, and, pegging him down, placed the strap over my shoulder.

It was not pleasant, for as soon as Joseph found himself in prison, and with no chief baker and butler to keep him company, he began to swear. Finding swearing of no effect, he howled ; and, as this was no better, he thrust one claw-armed paw out of the square oblong hole where fish were thrust in—when caught—and tried hard to get out the peg. Then he tried the other paw, with no better result, and ended by calling me something very horrible in cat, and curled himself up.

By this time I was in a hansom cab and being driven towards Westminster Bridge, over which I had myself taken, and away into the wilds by the "Elephant and Castle," where, as we were going down a dark street, I cunningly held the creel on the window, drew out the peg, and the lid fell down; I cried, "'Sh, cat !" when there was a leap, and Joseph was gone.

"One less !" I said ; poking up the trap, I cried, "Raven Street;" and the cabman turned his horse.

That cab would cost me about three shillings, I argued. Three shillings a cat would not be dear. I could manage three or four a night that way, and at that rate free my house in little more than a week.

I reached home in the highest of glee, returning by Westminster Bridge, so as to avoid the Waterloo Bridge toll, when, as I entered my study, I stopped and rubbed my eyes, for there sat Joseph on the top of the arm-chair.

It was damping, certainly; but I was not beaten; and during the next week I drove out in cabs and went by trains considerable distances, and lost the whole of the full-grown cats; though I might have saved myself the trouble, for they all came back at intervals of from two hours to four and five days, and in the most matter-of-fact way.

I worked hard at my losing game for a fortnight, and then gave it up in despair; and, after due consultation with Judith, came to the conclusion that there was no help for it—we must have a Borgian feast, to save me from another summons to that dreadful court.

So I visited the chemist's, and purchased several ounces of the horrible mineral known as arsenic; and Judith prepared a savoury mess—a kind of fricassee or curry of chicken, in which the curry-powder was a diabolical poison, and this when cold was placed on the back kitchen floor, and the cats all locked in—to die.

I say all; but Tibby did not go, as her maternal duties kept her in the waste-paper basket. Her turn was to come.

We listened at the door, and heard the doomed animals partake of the atrocious compound; and then, to get away from the death-shrieks that I knew must soon be heard, I went out into the back garden, spade in hand, and raking aside the missiles, proceeded to dig a great deep grave.

Four poor skeletons did I exhume in the process; but when the grave was deep and wide enough, I placed these sad remains at the bottom, covered them thickly with earth, and then pausing to wipe my face, I—ah!

Some one had sent a putty bullet at me, with too good an aim, for it struck me on the cheek, and glancing angrily on in the direction I suspected had given it birth, I hurried indoors, for there were ten different heads at as many windows, and I found that I was being watched.

"Are they all dead, Judith?"

"Not one of 'em, sir," said Judith. "I peeped in at the window, and they 're all a-sitting a-licking of theirselves, except them as is gone to sleep."

"Then they have not eaten the—the—the——"

"Pison, sir? Yes they have; the dish is as clean as if it had been washed."

"It has not had time yet to act," I said, frowning, "or else we 've given it to them too strong."

Judith stared and shook her head, and then we waited for the first cries of pain, looking guiltily one at the other, till after about an hour the first loud "miaou" began, and then came a chorus which lasted for a full hour, when there was the noise of a breaking window, caused by one of the cats knocking down a broom, which made an orifice large enough for the whole party to march out one by one, apparently quite well, thank you; and after a good deal of purring and rubbing, they all settled down to a comfortable snooze, except three or four kittens, who played with their tails, the table-cover, and anything they could find.

I saw the chemist about the strength of that poison, and he confessed to giving me powdered gypsum.

"You see, sir," he said with a smile, "we have to be so particular about selling poison now."

What was to be done? Poison was not to be thought of now. I could not decapitate them, nor drown them, nor employ another vicariously to the task; and if I did not get rid of the cunning creatures I should be hauled before the judge and bitterly amerced. There was nothing for it but to leave the settlement of the difficulty to chance; so with a sigh I took up my paper, glanced at it, and set it down, to take up another sent me by a relative, the "Great Midland Gazette."

"Hum!" I read, "Theatre Royal. Sales by Auction. Houses to Let. Great——eh? what 's this? bless my heart! Great Cat Show!"

I am very stout. I cannot help it. I might go in for Banting, but I prefer nice food. All the same, though I perspired profusely, I got up and waltzed round the room, waving that newspaper like a flag, till it was so much in ribbons that I could hardly read it. But read it I did. Great Cat Show: entries to be sent, carefully packed in baskets, to the secretary, with legible directions. The greatest care would be taken, and the animals properly fed. Owners of pets might rest assured that their cats would receive the same treatment as at home.

"Right fol lol de riddle lol de rido!" I sang that three times, and threw down the newspaper; and that night I went to bed and slept in peace, for here was the way out of my problem—my feline maze.

"Twenty-five baskets, Judith!" I cried before breakfast the next morning; and all that day we were busy packing and directing cats, taking them to different booking-offices, and paying their carriage to Great Irontown.

The last few baskets bothered us, for we could not take more than two to the same booking-office, and consequently had to hunt out offices in all sorts of out-of-the-way places. But perseverance is its own reward, and at eight o'clock I got out of a cab five pounds lighter in pocket, but without a cat; and as soon as I was in the passage and the door was closed, I threw my arms round Judith's neck and hugged her.

A week, a second week passed; and then, from an advertisement I saw in the *Great Midland Gazette*, I found that I must have omitted to fulfil all the rules exacted of senders, and not given my address for the return of the cats. In fact, the secretary was advertising to say that if Numbers So-and-so were not fetched away by a certain date, they would be sold to defray expenses.

But the other advertisement said that owners of cats might rest assured that their pets would receive the same treatment as at home.

Ha, ha, ha!

I say, don't ask *me* to take care of your cats when you go out of town, I'm too tabby now.

By the way, I wonder whether either of those cats took a prize.

If so, I give it or them, with my compliments, to the secretary.

GEO. MANVILLE FENN.

◆

AN ANSWER.

To My Mother-in-Law.

MOTHER, dear, we got your letter;
It was long, but very nice.
What could possibly be better
Than your heaps of good advice?
Need I say it gave me pleasure,
When my Florry read it through?
None can tell how much we treasure
Such a dear old pet as you!

'Tis no fond illusion, is it?—
(Best of beings, answer *No!*)—
That we may expect your visit
In about a week or so.
Rapture! We shall be in clover
All the while that you are here.
Can't you stop a month—or over?—
Answer quickly, mother dear!

Ere the honeymoon was ended
(Happy month—'twas ever May!)
Florry and myself intended
Asking you to come and stay.
In a close confabulation
We were striving how to frame
Lines of pressing invitation,
When your kind epistle came.

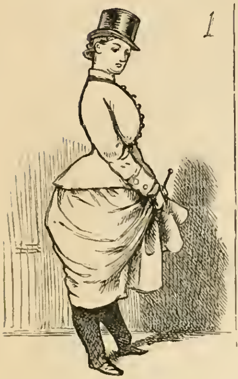
Both of us are happy, mother,
Happy as the day is long;
Oh, so fond of one another,
Far from Fashion's giddy throng!
Still, our life is rather lonely
In our tranquil suburb here;—
You could wake us up, if only
Just a little, mother dear!

You shall saunter with us daily
On the lawn and on the lea;
Or shall sit and prattle gaily
In the shade, beneath a tree.
Should the skies be unpropitious,
Cards will while away the time.
Single dummy is delicious;
Penny points are not a crime.

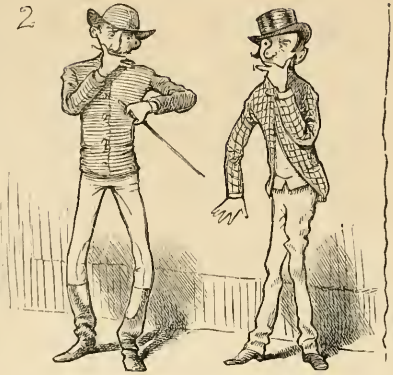
When may we prepare to greet you?
Tell us, for we long to hear:
(Could we send a cab to meet you
At the station, mother dear?)
Drop at once a line to Florry
(Pillar-box—not after five);
I should feel intensely sorry
To be out when you arrive!

HENRY S. LEIGH.

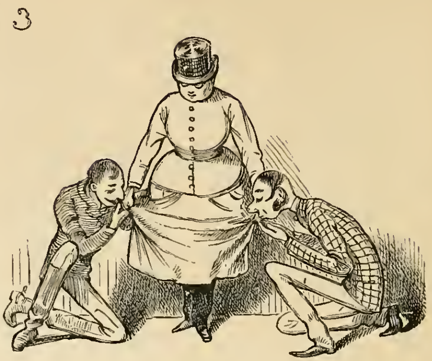
HE LAUGHS WHO WINS—A LEAP FOR LOVE; Or, She Would Have a Horseman.



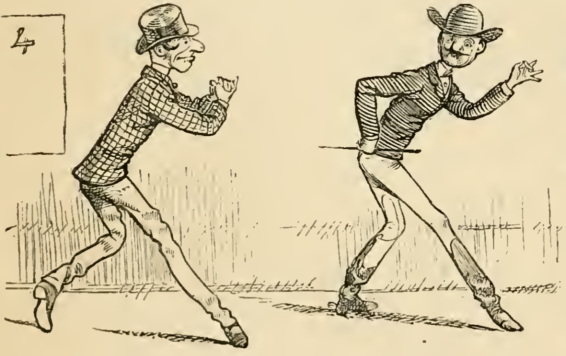
The Heroine.



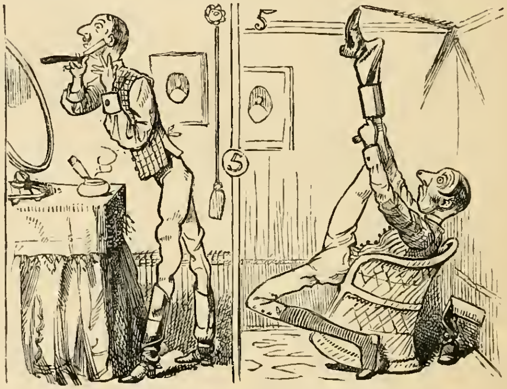
Suspicion dawns on the Heroes that they are bound on the same errand.



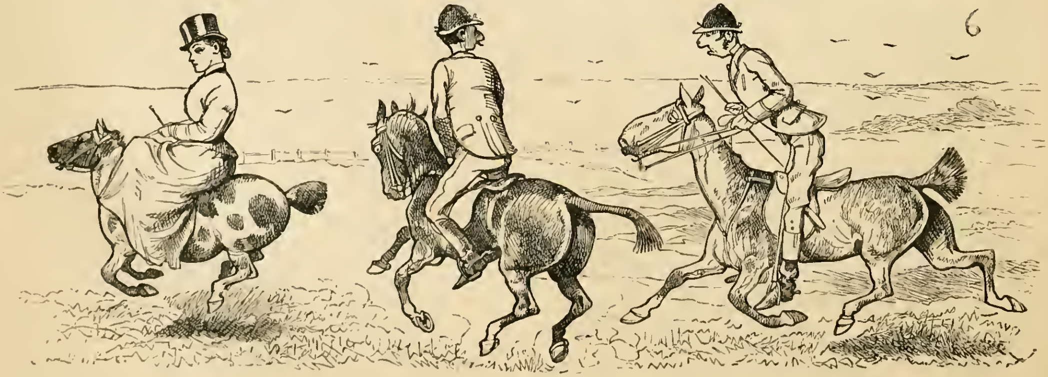
"You must decide by contest. I *must* have a horseman."



They depart, each confident of his superiority over the other.



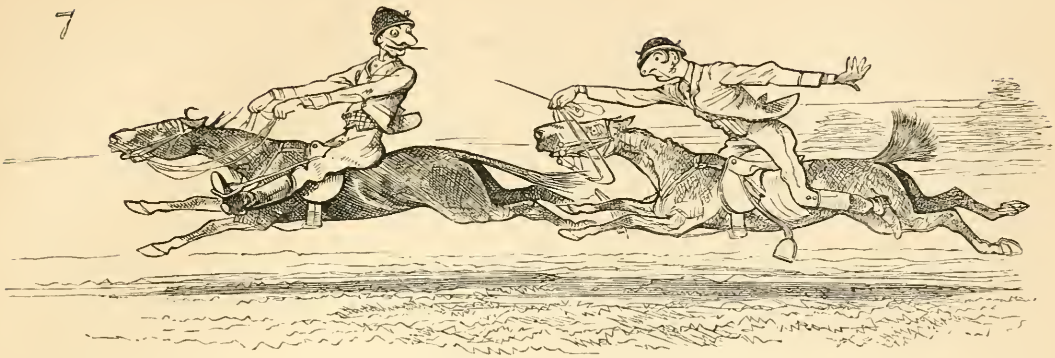
They prepare for the struggle.



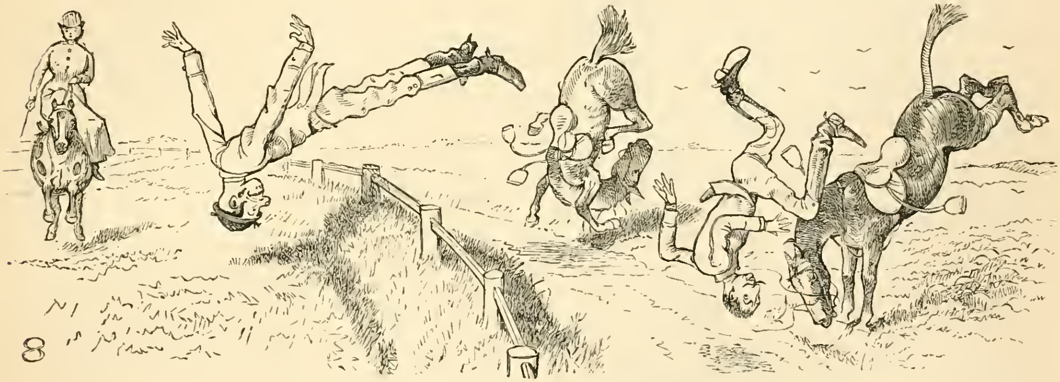
En route to the course.

HE LAUGHS WHO WINS—A LEAP FOR LOVE; Or, She Would Have a Horseman.

7



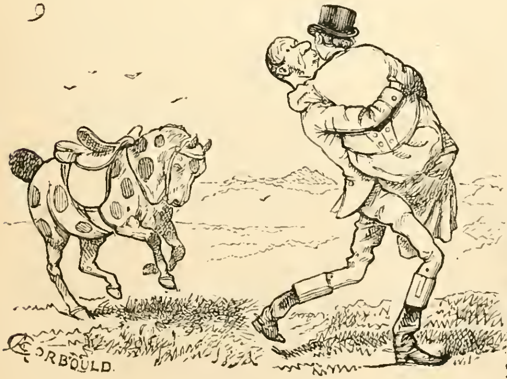
“They're off! The run.



8

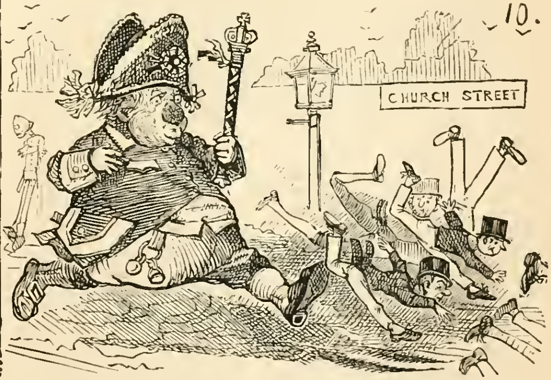
The leap.

9



Carrying off the prize.

10.

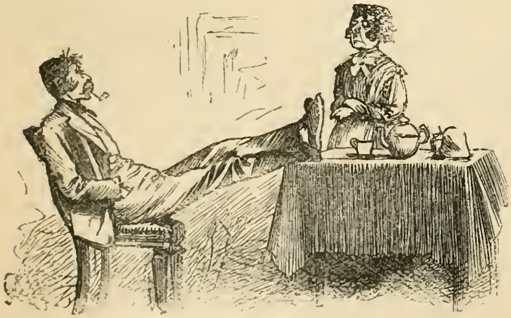

CHURCH STREET

The Parish Beadle cuts after the naughty little boys, who won't be quiet during the marriage service.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

BOB RATTLEPATE was hard up; not that there was anything very unusual in this circumstance, for with Bob "hard-uppishness" was a chronic ailment; but at the time in question he was uncommonly hard up. He had anticipated his weekly salary of thirty shillings for a month in prospective; on the preceding evening he had lost a match at billiards for a sovereign; his watch and chain had been confided to the care of a certain obliging relative; "Greased Lightning," whom he had backed as a "moral" for the St. Leger, had walked in with the crowd; and the exemplary patience of Mrs. Mangold, his good little landlady, was almost exhausted.

"I think I'm the unluckiest beggar in existence," he grumbled, re-lighting a clay pipe and placing his slippered feet on the tea-table; but his reverie was interrupted by a knock at the door, followed by the entrance of Mrs. Mangold.



"Now, Mr. Rattlepate," that lady began, "I really can't have no more nonsense; my husband an' me has to work too 'ard for our livins to let lodgins to people whose money we don't see the colour of for months an' months at a time. I'm getting quite tired of asking you to pay me my bill."

"And I'm just as tired of being asked," replied Bob; then, seeing a storm imminent, he added in the most coaxing tone he could assume, "I'm really awfully sorry, Mrs. M., but I'll try and raise the wind somehow this week, if you'll only"—he was going to say "have patience," but even Bob's cheek was not equal to that—"if you'll only give me another day or two."

"That's what you've said all along, Mr. Rattlepate; but me an' my husband's got to live, and a grown-up daughter to support in the bargain."

"Quite right," answered Bob, "and a remarkably handsome young woman she grows too, Mrs. Mangold; the very picture of you, ma'am; you'd pass for sisters anywhere."

This last remark had its intended effect: soothed by the compliment, Mrs. Mangold retired from the attack, leaving our friend to resume his brooding over the unkindness of Fate in general, and with regard to himself in particular.

"I wish I'd never been a lawyer's clerk," he mused. "There's that Dashington De Vere, with no more voice than I've got, only a lot more cheek, earns more in one week singing a few paltry songs than I do slaving away at a confounded desk for a month. But what on earth am I to do? I can't raise the wind any more to the tune of a solitary tanner!"

Suddenly he started up, a wild, desperate light in his eyes. "It's my last card," he exclaimed, "and I'll play it!"

An hour later he left the house unperceived.

Next morning Mrs. Mangold, upon taking her lodger's breakfast upstairs, was surprised to find his room tenantless; a minute after her husband, startled by her screams, rushed upstairs and found her seated in Bob's easy chair in a fit of hysteria; an open letter was in her hand; snatching it from her he read as follows:

"DEAR MR. AND MRS. MANGOLD,—Since I cannot meet my liabilities, I have resolved to escape them, and to pay the only debt in my power—that of nature. My body will be found in the canal.

"Yours respectfully,

"ROBERT RATTLEPATE.

"P.S.—Best love to Polly."

Bob Rattlepate's body was not found in the canal, but a hat, marked inside with his name and address, was discovered next morning by a bargee, who conveyed it to the Mangolds. They, tender-hearted souls! were too grieved for the fate of the unfortunate Bob to think of the money he had owed them; but still more affected was their daughter Polly, who had cherished a sneaking kindness for the good-for-nothing lodger, and who shed many tears over the postscript of his note. Lodgers came and lodgers went, but Polly went on mourning the fate of her loved one long after it had been forgotten in the neighbourhood: in vain the baker's boy invited her to share his humble cottage, in vain the nearest butcher proffered her his heart; she gave the local greengrocer "turnips;" she advised the love-lorn milkman to "walk his chalks;" like Ariadne bereft of Theseus, like Calypso deserted by Ulysses, the heartbroken Polly wept for the loss of her parents' "young-man-lodger."

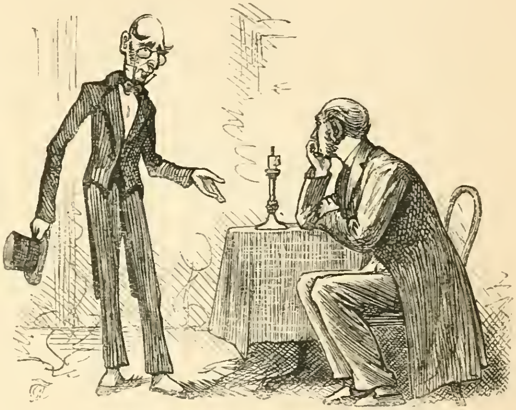
II.

BUT worse misfortunes were fated to overshadow the house of Mangold. Some twelve months after the date of the foregoing chapter, Mr. Mangold, acting under the influence of certain friends, invested his hard-earned savings in "The Utopian Island Gas Works Company, Limited," which concern, after an existence of six months' duration, went into liquidation, thereby leaving poor Mangold a ruined man. A further call was made on the shares he held, which he found himself unable to meet, and absolute beggary stared him in the face. At this juncture an unexpected friend appeared.

No one was more surprised than Mangold himself when Mr. Erasmus Skinner, a neighbouring auctioneer, offered to advance him the sum of one hundred pounds, free of interest. Mr. Skinner was a churchwarden and a great parochial authority, but owed his chief reputation to his habits of "sharp practice" and his avarice; still, his offer was made in such apparent good faith that Mr. Mangold, after some hesitation, gratefully accepted it, whereupon Mangold, taking the hint, handed his disinterested friend bills for the amount advanced.

But, alas for Samuel Mangold! just before these bills came due another unexpected call was made upon those terrible shares, which satisfied, he found himself unable to repay his obligation; whereupon Mr. Skinner's motive came to light.

He was a bachelor, and had for some time regarded Polly Mangold with as much admiration as he considered consistent in a man holding the position of a churchwarden; as soon as he found her father in his power, he lost no time in declaring his affection, and soliciting Polly to become Mrs. Erasmus Skinner.



Then came Polly's hour of trial. She could not love her new suitor, for he was old, pompous, and notoriously selfish; besides, there was something repugnant in the idea of this cunning auctioneer knocking her down, like a table or a sofa, to his own bid; but then she thought of her father and mother, both stricken down by sorrow and years; so, with tears in her eyes and a heavy heart, she asked him to wait a little longer, cherishing, like a maiden Micawber, a secret hope that something would "turn up."

"But why should I wait, Mary Anne?" asked Erasmus. "Procrastination is the soul of bus——I mean the thief of time. I'm punctual in my dealings, and" (here his voice deepened into a harsh grating tone), "I expect others to be the same in theirs. Listen! To-morrow is Christmas Eve, the day on which your father's bills fall due; to-morrow evening, therefore, I shall present my hand for your acceptance or those bills for payment."

Christmas Eve arrived, and so did Erasmus Skinner—an engaged ring which he had bought in cheap at an auction in one pocket, the awful bills in another. Entering the sitting-room, he found Samuel Mangold standing with his back to the fire between his wife and daughter. Mangold's face, always of a "warm tint," was more deeply flushed than usual; the smile, too, that in cloud and sunshine usually lit up his chubby face, for once was wanting.

Erasmus Skinner cleared his throat, and posed himself in the attitude he usually adopted at vestry meetings, preparatory to making a speech.

"Samuel Mangold," he began, "perhaps you have observed the growing regard with which I have lately beheld your daughter, Mary Anne. I think I may say, without egotism, that a marriage with myself would be, socially and morally, advantageous to that young person; should she, however, be so ill advised as to reject my offer, I shall have no other alternative but to present these bills for the amount of one hundred pounds. Now, Mary Anne, what are you going—going—going—I mean what are you going to do?"

Then the storm that was gathering in Sam Mangold's heart burst out, as Mrs. Mangold afterwards described it, "like a wolcaner."

"Mr. Skinner, look 'ere! I ain't a man of eddication; but I'll say this o' myself, what I won't of you, I'm a man with a 'art. You come to me when I was in trouble as a friend, I believed you, and I took the money you offered to lend me; but what I thought was friendship was on'y cunning. You knew an old man like yerself could never expect to get the love of a fine young gal like this, so you thought you'd buy her. You infernal villain! you can sell up every stick I've got, and turn me and my old woman into the street without a 'ome; but our child's our child, and while I've got a right hand to work with, I'd sooner chop it off with my left than sell my flesh an' blood to a varmint like you!"

"Brayvo, old son! them's my sentiments to a T."

What voice was that? Was it a ghost Polly beheld in the doorway, that she swooned and sank in her mother's arms? No; ghosts don't usually go about in window-pane patterned ulsters, wearing crimson neckties, and smoking Intimidads. It was Bob Rattlepate in the flesh, not the spirit, who advanced into the room, and, taking Polly from her mother's arms, brought the colour back to her lips with a hearty kiss.

"But what does this mean?" chorused the Mangolds; "we thought you were drowned in the canal two years ago."

"No fear!" answered Bob; "not such a muff: that was only a slant. You see, I was awfully down on my luck, when an idea struck me that if I could get clean away, I might do well in some provincial town as a comic singer; so I wrote that note, chucked my tile in the canal, bolted off, and—to cut a long story short—you now behold 'The Champion Topical and Comic Provincial Vocalist.' But I often thought about you, Mrs. M., and you, old boy! and what genuine bricks you were. And I never forgot little Polly here. So I made up my mind that, when I'd saved enough money, I'd come back, pay off old scores, and ask you to let me marry Miss M., and settle down in some respectable business. I've kept my word so far. I let myself in with the latch-key I had when I bolted. You'd have heard me knocking at the door here, if you hadn't been kicking up a row with this amiable-looking party. As for you, old Knock-'em-down, you'd better skedaddle while you're safe, and send round in a couple of hours for your money."

"But can you, and will you pay him, Bob?" asked Polly, who had quite recovered from her fright—assured that no ghost could rattle out as quickly as the new arrival had been speaking.

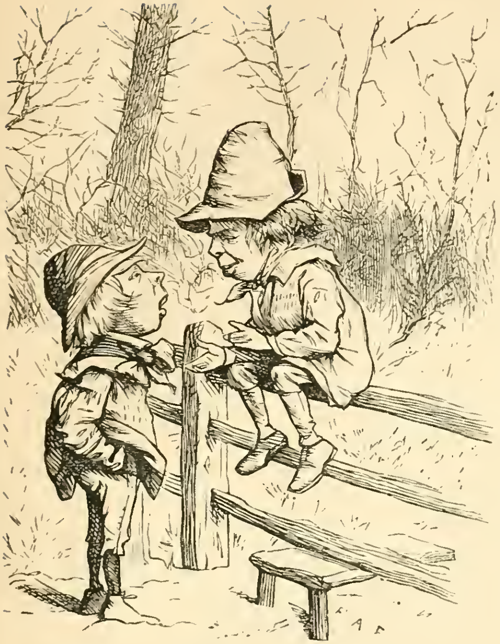
"Can I?—Will I? Of course I can and will. Haven't the old folks here done me many a good turn in old times? Yes, Polly, my pet, one good turn deserves another. I've got the pieces, and as my last song expresses it—

"'I only want my darling little Polly!'"

H. T. Johnson.

OUTSIDE THE FRAY.

"*Mon petit coin.*"—BÉRANGER.



THE bleak tide of battle goes surging along,
  The foemen—how fiercely they fight in the fray!
Down crushed are the weak by the hand of the strong,
  Loud cheers and deep groans greet the close of the day.
This battle of life, all so ruthless and hard,—
  Now this way and that,—now joy, singing, or moan,—
For this bustle and strife take who will the reward,
  If you leave me to sit in my corner alone.

Though tinsel and trick in each corner be done,—
  Though pledges are broken and treaties are torn,
Great battles are lost and great victories won,
  And dynasties vanish like mist of the morn;
Let those go who care for the rush and the roar,—
  The slaughtering of thousands to build up a throne!
I'd rather be picking up shells on the shore,
  Or sit in my quiet cool corner alone.

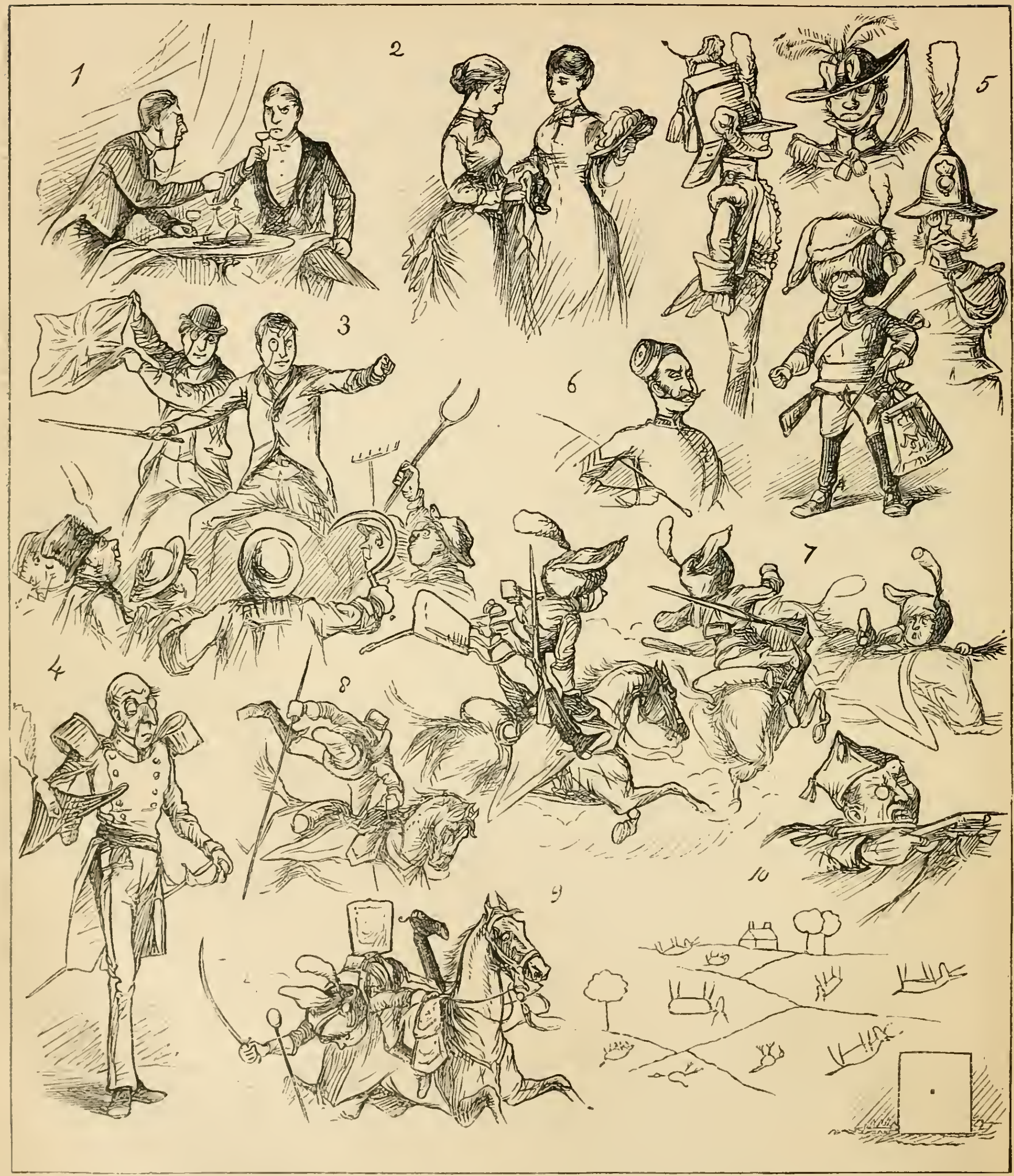
Some fight the rough elements in their career,—
  The mad raging ocean with lightning aglow;
Some dauntless press forward—though danger is near;
  Some climb to their summit great mountains of snow.
And some,—well, there's some made of different clay,—
  And candour insists that at once I should own
I rather would be quite outside of the fray,
  And sit in a cool little corner alone.

There build me a castle high up in the air,
  And guard the poor toilers that live down below;
I'd give rich reward to the good and the fair,
  And silvr'y bright streams through the meadows should flow;
The flocks and the herds, and the lowing of kine,
  The ripe waving corn ere the summer has flown;
All hearts should be glad, and the joy would be mine
  While building my castle and sitting alone.

Oh, there should be never a sorrower seen,
  No wailing nor weeping,—no tattered nor torn,
But gladness and joy in each corner I ween,
  And charm of song-singing to welcome the morn.
The kings that are ruthless I'd thrust from their throne,
  No cruel oppression or wrong should be there;
And this is my vision while sitting alone,
  Dream-building a castle high up in the air.

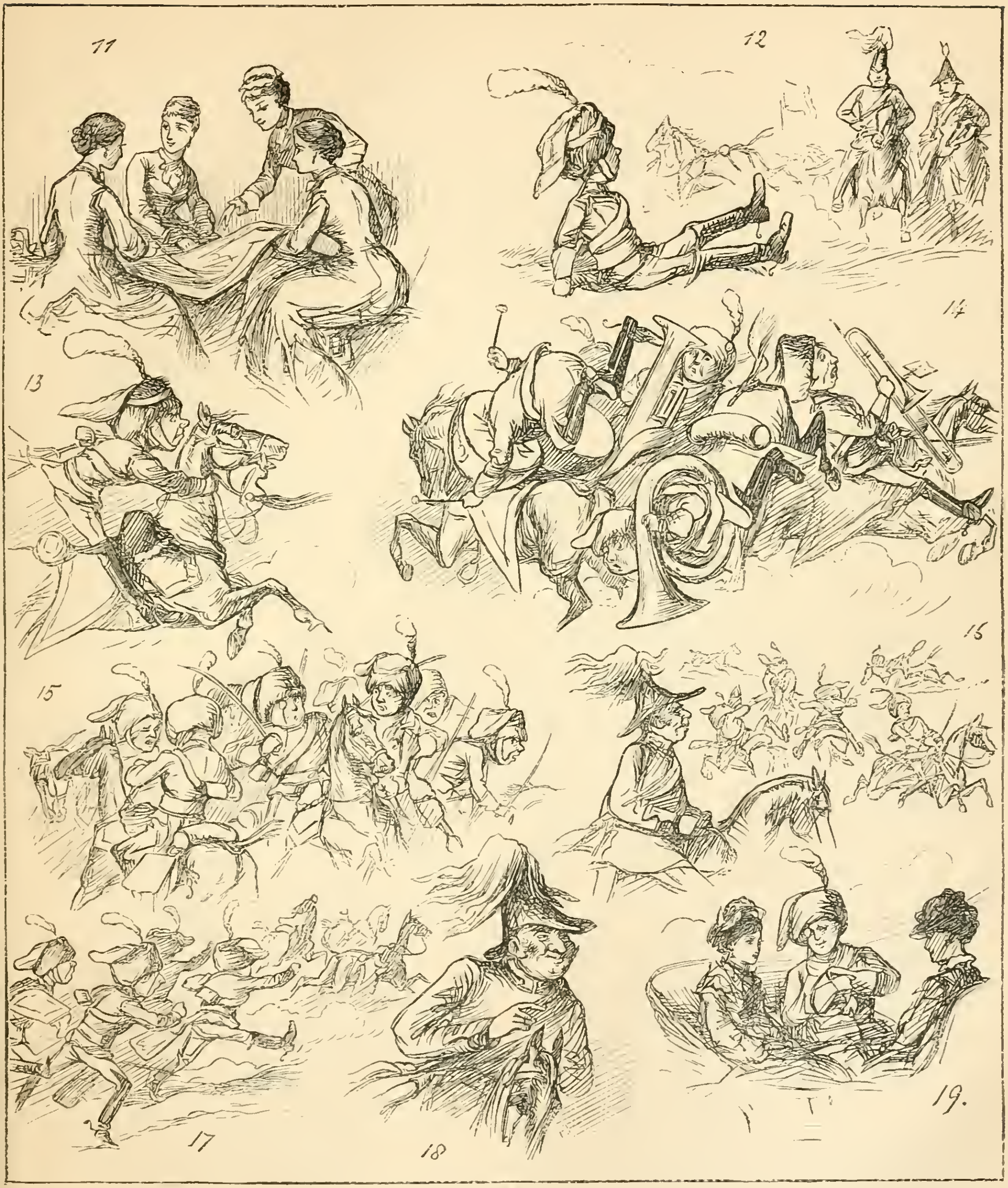
GEORGE DALZIEL.

THE MUDDLETON MOUNTED RIFLES.



1. Mr. Muddleton, alarmed at our responsibilities in the East, discusses his resolve to form a Corps of Yeomanry with his friend and neighbour Mr. Popkins,—2. While Mrs. Muddleton discusses bonnets with her fair sister-in-law.—3. Mr. Muddleton, assisted by Mr. Popkins, who produces the national ensign at a telling moment, meets with enthusiastic support.—4. Through the interest of Sir Timothy Toddletrot,—5. The Corps are permitted to select their own uniform.—6. Having obtained the services of Sergeant Slasher of the Cavalry Depôt,—7. The Muddleton Mounted Rifles commence to ride without stirrups;—8. And the officers practice tent-pegging,—9. And lemon-cutting, with startling results.—10. Having procured a rifle range, they exercise thereon (N.B.—The annexed design is a facsimile of a portion of the range after the first day's practice; also an engraving from a photograph of the target, taken at the same time

THE MUDDLETON MOUNTED RIFLES.



11. The ladies employ their fair fingers in preparing a banner to lead the Corps to future victory.—12. Major-General Sir Softly Sawder, commanding the district, inspects the regiment, and is received in a somewhat unusual manner by the commanding officer.—13. Lieut. Popkins as he appeared trotting past.—14. The mounted band playing "God save the Queen."—15. The M. M. R. wheel into line.—16. The M. M. R. charge by troops.—17. The M. M. R. perform the pursuing practice at speed.—18. Close of the inspection. Major-General Sir Softly Sawder (*loquitur*). "Much gratified; smart appearance; patriotic movement. With a *leetle* more attention to dressing, gentleman. and one or two minor points," etc., etc., etc.—19. Lieut. Popkins' steed having disappeared, he returns in a manner quite agreeable to his feelings.

THE LAST AFRICAN EXPLORER.

MY travels have not perhaps been so extensive, or so well advertised in the papers, as those of Mr. Stanley and Captain Burnaby; but they have been much more select, and are extremely interesting. I neither travelled to puff a couple of newspapers, nor to work miracles with patent pills upon the wretched barbarians; I hate thirteen-penny-halfpenny physic, and I despise the penny papers. I disdain to fill pages and columns with desultory descriptions of my voyage and adventures to the scene of discovery. Suffice it to say that after a most fatiguing journey I found myself by chance in a remote and hitherto undiscovered region in the centre of Africa, but having inadvertently left my keys and other scientific instruments on the mantelshelf of the private boarding-house where I was lodging in Surrey Street, Strand, am unable to define with exactitude the latitude and longitude of the place. However, I knew it must have been Africa, because I had walked into it from Alexandria. I had walked many miles out of Alexandria, and lost my way, and walked on for some years to find it; but instead of finding my way, I found some other people's ways, which seemed to me so much more surprising than my way, that I propose to dwell upon their ways rather than on mine.

Everybody knows that Central Africa is a wild and untameable region, a sink of savagery, full of naked natives with poisoned arrows, and greasy canoes, and spears, and old firelocks, and beads, and feathers and things. But I saw none of these things in the region to which chance so fortunately directed my wandering steps. By a singular coincidence, I had been completely versed in the original Aryan tongue by Professor Max Müller, and it was a charming surprise to me to find that the natives of the country at which I had arrived spoke no other language. It sounded to my ears like ancient music, and I felt myself at home with them directly. I was agreeably surprised at the intelligence of the inhabitants. I have an incessant thirst for statistical information, and I am accustomed to believe no other. And as soon as I had said in pure Aryan, "How do you do?" and "What a fine morning it is, to be sure," to the first person I met, I asked him gravely to give me full particulars of the statistics of the criminal population of the country.

The man looked at me in a highly curious way, and shook his head. (Don't suppose he was a black man with wool on his head. He was an average specimen of the inhabitants—his complexion a delicate copper-colour, his hair and beard silky and red-brown.)

"I have *heard* of such things as criminals," he thoughtfully said, "but I have never seen one. We haven't a single specimen in our country; but if you require information on extinct species, you had better go to the King, whom you will find affable and approachable. He always awaits the audience of strangers in his kitchen-garden of afternoons; but the common people are not allowed to give official information on abstruse topics, or to enunciate opinions unlicensed by the Crown and its Ministry."

"You have a Ministry, then?" I asked in surprise. "I thought you were a race of savages."

My companion replied, "Monsieur is incredulous upon insufficient information. We do not consider ourselves savages, and we are quite indifferent to the consideration of outsiders. But on these matters you had better consult the King: we citizens never discuss subjects of the kind; we pay men to do that, and should never keep dogs if we had to bark ourselves."

The man then directed me to the residence of the King, and took his leave with a studied and respectful bow.

I found the King's palace an unpretentious building of thatched red brick. His Majesty was in the back garden, sitting on a rail, with a short pipe in his mouth. The expression of his countenance was one of imperturbable benignity. (I afterwards learnt that that was what the Kings of this country were chosen for.)

His Majesty asked me to be seated, and gracefully offered a share of the rail. *Je m'assis.*

He asked me as to my nationality and my business. I told him I was a member of the Royal Jollyological Society, of London, travelling for pleasure, and in pursuit of statistical information.

The King said he had heard there was such a place as London, and believed it was in England; but that he and his people had too many more important subjects to engage their attention to neglect the cares of State for the study of a science so paltry as Geography. The proper study of mankind is man, not territory. He repeated that he had heard of England in general, and London in particular, and were it not that he disagreed with the principle of missionary enterprise, and thought it wiser to let people mind their own business, he should have long ago sent missionaries to England to expose the defects of its Constitution.

I then proceeded to ask his Majesty some questions as to the nature of his own Government. He refilled his pipe, partook of a tankard of excellent beer, silently handed it to me, wiped his long beard with a lawn pocket-handkerchief far softer than silk, and began:

"Our chief Ministers," said the King, "are paid munificent salaries to do nothing but think. They have nothing to do with the executive. They are only allowed to think of one thing apiece, and when they have thought that particular thing clean out, they open their mouths and speak it; and if it is approved, it is written down into law and preached to the people by officials who are paid to preach and *not* think. But a Minister only speaks once, and goes out of office as soon as ever he has spoken his precept."

"But why do you only get a single thought out of each man?" I asked.

"Well," said the King, "it is more than the average you can get out of a man, and more than you can get by your plan; and our thoughts *are* new. A man has but one wisdom-tooth to pull. We are," the King continued, "of course, in advance of your ideas. We go entirely for the encouragement of the species. We assist Nature in promoting the survival of the fittest. We never suppress human nature wherever we find it, and the consequence is that crime is, with us, an extinct phenomenon. We have extinguished crime, sir. Nothing more simple. The old penal system was very expensive and excessively disagreeable; and at last it occurred to one of our professional thinkers, that, just as dirt is only matter in a wrong place, so crime is only moral ardour developed in too circumscribed a field. So, instead of insisting that all men and women should be brought up to pattern, we offered official encouragement to what are called 'criminal tendencies'—and had, I must say, very remarkable success in developing varieties. Take murderers, for instance. What do *you* do with them?"

"Hang 'em," said I.

"We never do," said the King. "We *use* them. In fact, we use all our waste. Murderers are, of course, necessary to the State. You spend millions a year in training men to the artistic trade of murder—you have whole army corps of them; you arm them with the most powerful and ingenious weapons of murder that you can devise; yet you no sooner find a man in whom a natural aptitude for murder is developed in a superior degree, than you go and hang him. Do you not see what an idle waste of material you involve? Whenever *we* find a murderer—a man, that is to say, who without any scientific training shows a true instinct for killing, we make an army officer of him at once. For if an untrained man can kill, in an amateur sort of way, with a stick or a stone, how much more will patriotism inspire him to do, when scientifically trained to weapons of precision, and well paid for following his natural bias? Persons merely convicted of violent assaults we sentence to the ranks, where their robust inclinations may find every gratification in assaulting the enemies of the country. This plan saves prisons and warders, besides judges and juries, and provides the best possible army at no cost to the country besides clothes and victuals. Ours is the most terrible army in the world. Nothing can touch battalions in which every soldier has a natural turn for violence."

"And what do you do with your thieves?" I asked.

"Same principle," replied the King. "Thieving is a slightly exaggerated desire to acquire, which, however objectionable when manifested in a narrow sphere, is highly valuable in a corporate or official capacity. Governments and corporations have to rob the public, to put their hands deeply into the pockets of individuals, and they require pocket-pickers—acquisitive agents. The truly earnest acquirer—opprobriously described as a thief—thieves for thieving's sake, and not for selfish ends, and will always make, if not an efficient Minister of Finance or a surveyor of taxes, at the very least a finance agent or a rate-collector. We utilize all phenomenal developments of the sort in the service of the State. We give our people line. If a kite wants to fly, *we* give it string: *you* cut it."

"But you must have law courts, for the adjustment of debts?"

"Not so," said the King. "We simply enact that no debt is recoverable by law. The result is that all trade is done for ready money. Nobody makes bad debts; bankruptcy is impossible. That is the encouragement of the creditor."

"How do you deal with drunkards?"

"Well," said the King, "we encourage them, as we do all our subjects. A great number of drunkards rise to the assault classes, and are drafted off into the army, where discipline flogs it out of them. But where men manifest true original genius for drink, and must and will drink, we do as I say, we encourage them. The State provides them with drink free, and urges them to drink themselves into their graves as quickly as they can. They are exhibited to the public in glass houses, where they have the free run of the spirit-taps during the progress of their self-extinction; and they form a spectacle which I can assure you is no temptation to the public to follow their example. Liquor should not be sold to drunkards, but provided for them at public expense; it clears us of them quicker, and is much the cheapest and most benevolent plan."

"Do you adopt compulsory education?" I inquired.

"Certainly not, sir," said the King; "no more than we adopt compulsory feeding. We provide the fodder and encourage its consumption, but we do not prod children up to partake of it. We offer every encouragement and give every facility for education, and we reward with distinction all who acquire high attainments."

"But you must still have a good many uneducated persons?"

"We have," answered the King. "The capacity for imbibing education is very varied, but we allow people to follow their desires and assist them in their development. The dunce is a necessary ingredient to any truly happy population. Our dunces have frequently attained to the greatest eminence in other walks than literary, simply because we do not stuff them with uncongenial diet. We regard dunces as a most valuable element of the Constitution. They are your practical men, who work and don't dream, and don't keep saying 'Why?'"

"And what about sanitation?" I asked.

"The same system of encouragement," replied the King. "If the waste is properly utilized, sanitation follows as a natural consequence. The only thing we punish is disease, and in the case of all persons not dying a natural death, their property is forfeited to the State—because they *ought* to die a natural death; it is *un*-natural of them if they don't; and any State worthy of the name provides the means of their doing so."

"But how about the economy of Nature?" I demanded. "How do you get over that?"

"By humble imitation of it," said the King. "Instead of grumbling at the summer heat, and complaining of the winter floods, we store the sunshine for our winter's fires, and we store the winter floods to alleviate the burning drought of July. *You* have only got as far as drying summer grass for winter use. *We* utilize everything, and encourage everything, and recognize the natural principle that what you mistakenly call evil is undeveloped good."

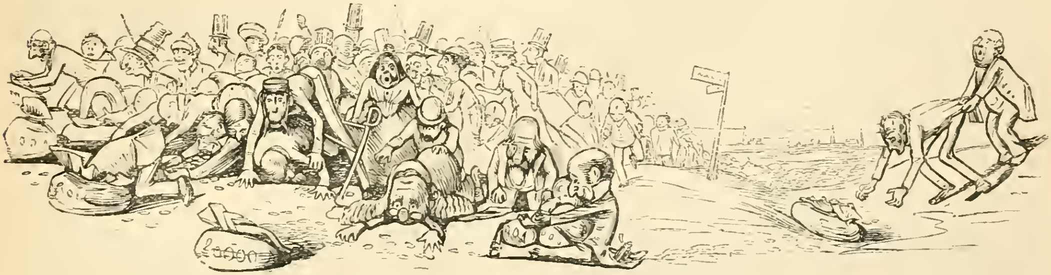
I could stand this doctrine no longer. It was statistics I wanted, and the King calmly but firmly declined to produce any statistics. I cannot endure the assertion of arguments and principles with which I do not agree without getting very angry. I was shocked at every detail of the King's Government—although, I must confess that his kingdom appeared to me to be a very quiet place to live in, as every person seemed to be happy and to have property. But the ideas of this monarch were so unstatistical, so contrary to propriety, so shockingly bold, that I determined at once what to do. I said,

"I really must leave you. I have an important engagement. I do not feel well. This wholesale disturbance of all my native ideas is deeply painful to me. Lemme go. Show me my way out."

"Very good," said the King. "I believe you said you lived in an antiquated place called, I think, London, in a country which I have seen described on the map as England—but it is a country with which I am totally unacquainted. I will make a note of it."

The King then ordered his coachman to drive me home; and, after a long and monotonous journey, in which nothing occurred worth mentioning, I returned to my lodgings in Surrey Street, Strand, and was fortunate enough to find my keys and scientific instruments on the mantelshelf in the very place where I had left them.

EUSTACE HINTON JONES.



REAL LIFE.

ROMANCE has all fled from our lives,
Used up in sensational novels!
From John o' Groats down to St. Ives
Each thought in a money-bag grovels!
In coining our souls into gold
We labour from Sunday to Sunday;
Then gather fresh vigour to hold
The very same course upon Monday.

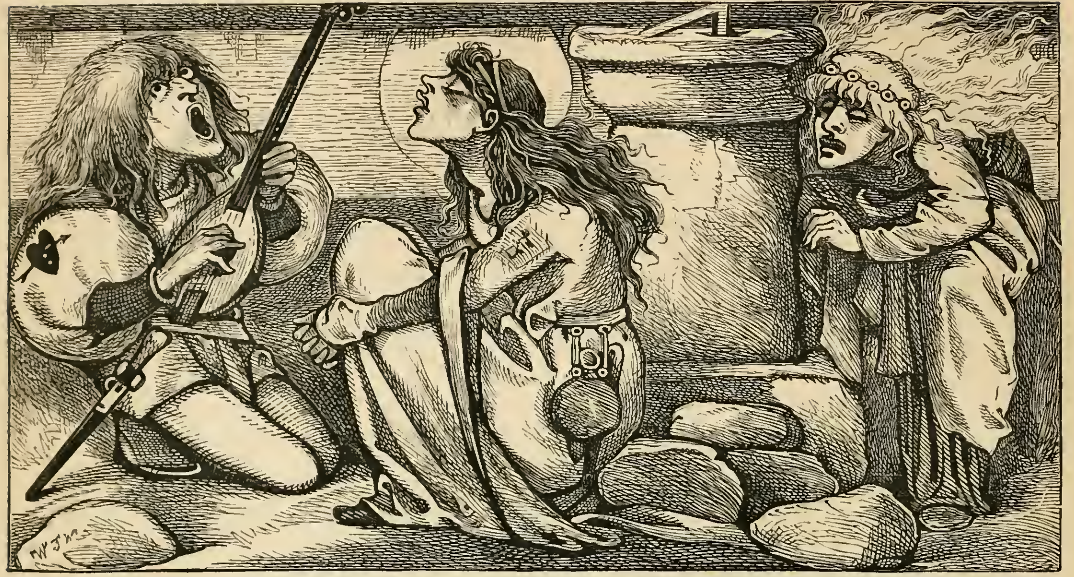
We care not for friendship or love,
Unless it conduces to profit;
We help falling friends with a shove,
If we can make merchandise of it;
What use is the heart but to keep
Our bodies alive by pulsations?
What harvest from kin do we reap,
Excepting in money relations?

There is but one use for the brain—
The finding out ways to make money:
For man not to think about gain
Appears inexpressibly funny!
What value can politics be
Except as affecting the prices?
For what exhortations care we
Except correspondents' "advices"?

So day has its labour for gold,
And night has its visions of Mammon;
Existence for lucre is sold,
And honesty bartered for "gammon!"
'T is money alone makes the man,
And fortune the feminine witches;
And happy the end, if we can
Meet death in the odour of riches!

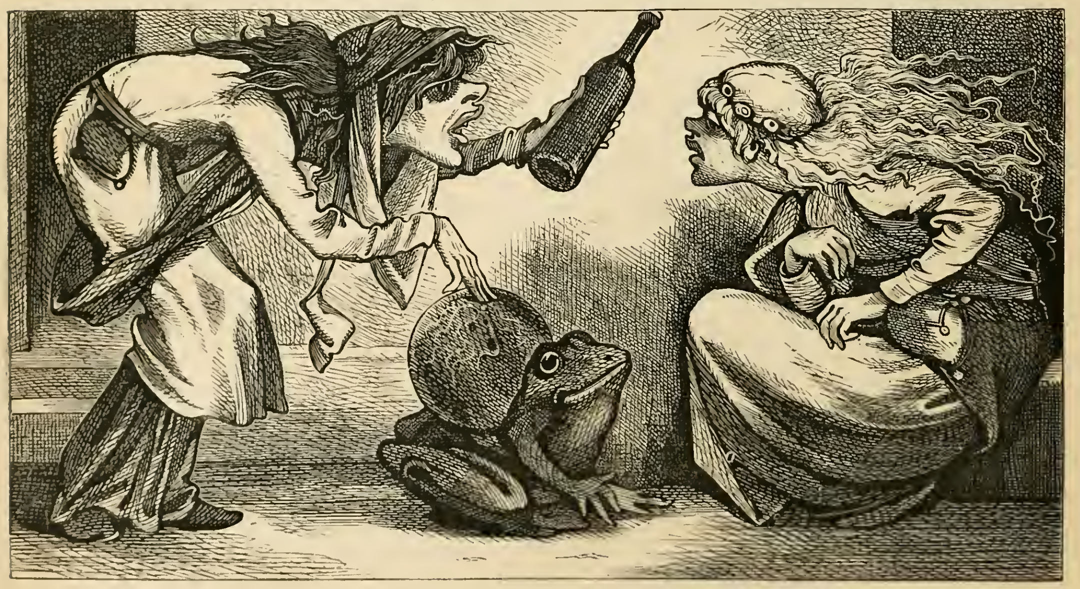
C. H. WARING.

A RUM PHILTER: In Four Chapters.



CHAPTER I.

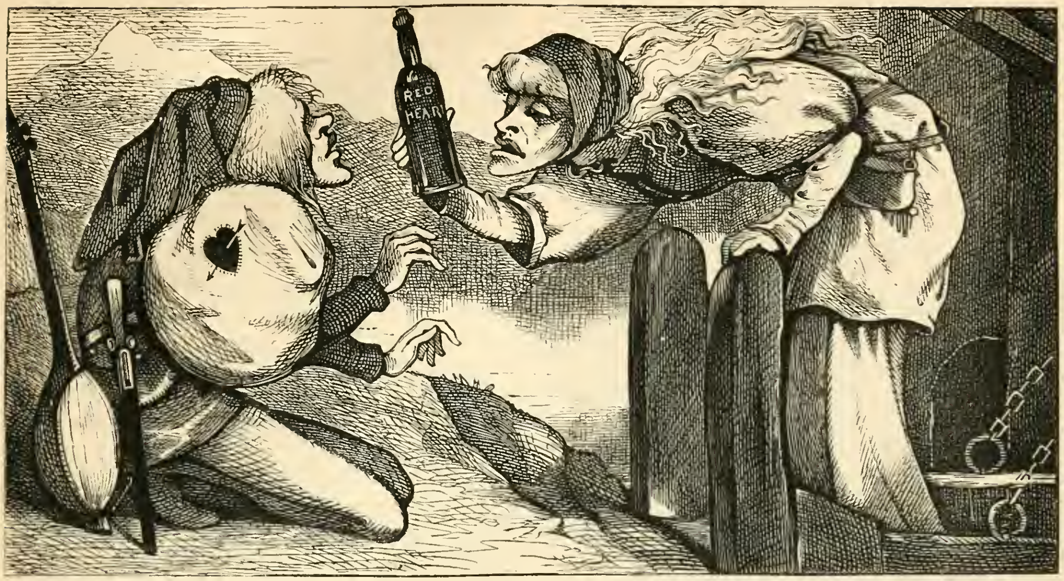
Beside the swiftly-flowing river, reflecting the full moon, sat Sir Guy and the Lady Eveline; he sang of love, and his melodious power mingled with the ripples of the water; but they were watched by the eye of jealousy, for the Lady Rufus also loved him.



CHAPTER II.

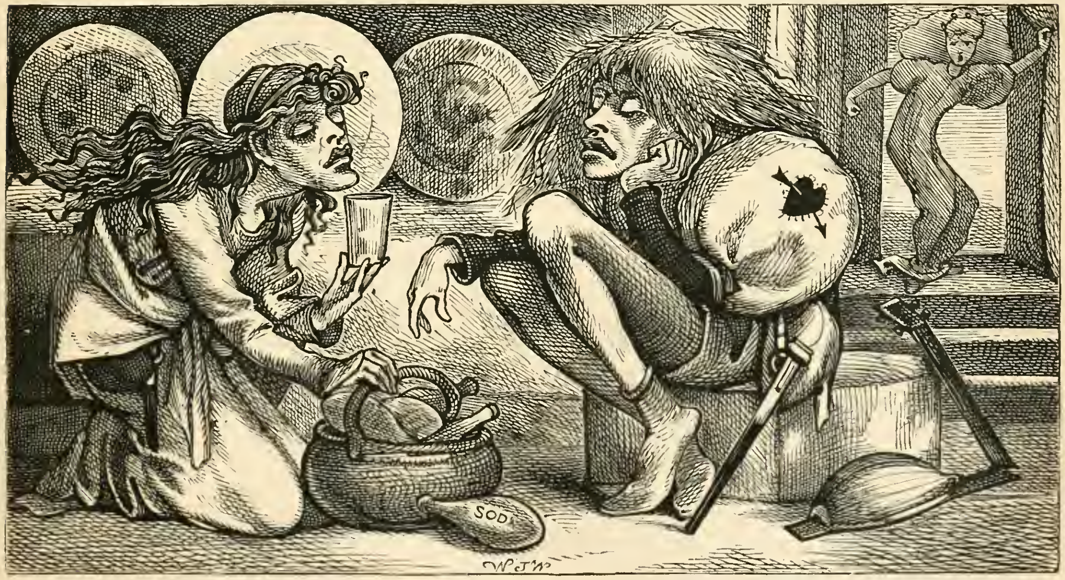
She hastened to the dark woman, a reputed witch.—"Give me," she muttered, "a burning, consuming love philter.'—"I will, shrieked the witch.

A RUM PHILTER: In Four Chapters.



Chapter III.

One day Sir Guy called at Rufus Castle; he left when the golden shades of evening were flickering round.—The lady clashed the drawbridge down. "Stay one moment," she murmured; "accept this phial, drain it to the dregs, and you shall be for ever happy."



Chapter IV.

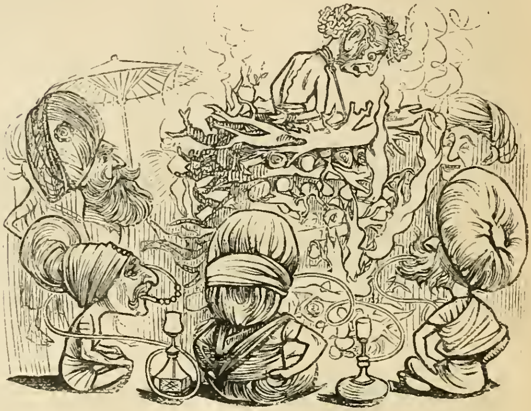
And the effect was rum—very rum! So Eveline gave him soda-water.—"That fearful potation, ah! this dreadful headache. Oh!" he groaned, "I will for ever despise the Lady Rufus."—The lady heard him, gave one terrible shriek, and fled.

THE REFORMATION OF SHERE BHADN:

A Tradition of Benares.

SIVA is mighty, and destroys. The Nawab Odeah Omi Ogooroo was to die, for had not the holy water of Allahabad been brought to him, and had he not washed in it, and after that drunk it? And had not the Brahmins offered sacrifices for him? And what other medicines are known to man? So his relations, grieving sorely, took him by the head and by the heels and carried him down to the holy Ganges, and laid him on the bank, and took mud and filled up his mouth and his ears and his nostrils, and they poured over him great quantities of cold water, and built a great pile of wood, and laid him on the top to dry. Then all his relations, who did not shrink from the path of duty, went to fetch his widow with much holy rejoicing; but she had hidden herself in a secret hole, and they sought her many days until they found her. Then they carried her gently to the pile of wood, and brought torches, and invited her to mount and take her part in the ceremony, for they said, "Duty is irksome, but shall we not take our parts also?" for their parts were to light the fire and to look on. But the widow of the wealthy Odeah, alone of all his relations, shrank from the path of duty, and hesitated. And they argued with her this way and that, showing how they shrank not from their part, which was to look on; and they coaxed her, with many tears, and called her many names, and swore.

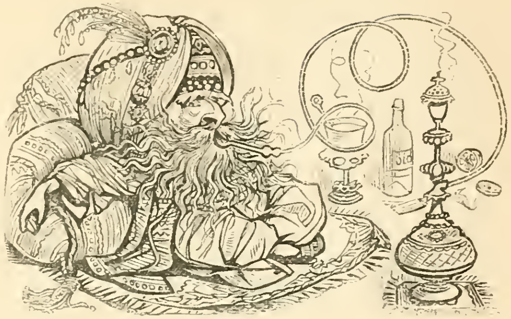
And there was a distant relation of Odeah who scoffed at the rest, and counselled her to neglect her duty; and she, being perhaps biassed in her mind, listened to him, and shamefully declined to ascend the pile; then they lifted her gently by the hair and by the ankles to the top of the pile, and set fire to the bottom with great haste; but she slid down on the farther side and went her way. So she became a shameful thing and a byword. But the relations of Odeah, who were willing to do their parts and would not be disappointed, fetched a beggar of the lowest caste, and put him on the top of the pile with Odeah (who was now sufficiently dry), and lighted it at the bottom, and looked on with much interest.



Now, he of the wrong counsel had come from distant places, and none knew whether he was of any caste; but he cared not, and so was an impious man. And his badness was such as none could measure, for he took the gods of the faithful—the little wooden gods decorated with blue and vermilion and yellow—and made them more round even than they had originally been made, by knocking off their little sacred noses and their other projections; and he played "bowls" with them, which is the profane game of the English. Nay, he shot with peas at the holy monkeys of Hunimaun (to kill whom is worse than death!) and gave sly pinches to the fat bulls of Siva, and kicked them from the steps of his house, twisting their respected tails; and he killed in his house all the fleas, and the insects which it is not lawful among the English to mention, for there are many superstitions among them.

And this man, who was named Shere Bhadn, said, "I will marry the widow of Odeah Omi Ogooroo, for she is wealthy;" yet she, lamenting for the deceased Odeah, was averse. And this was a great fault in her, for though it is meet that a woman should grieve deeply for him who is departed (the more particularly if he have been masterful over her), yet it is not meet that any mere woman should hesitate to comply with the suggestion of a man, who is a superior being, and, however wicked, cannot by nature and by the sacred laws be so wicked as she. So Shere Bhadn—and in this thing he was justified—fetched her by force, and made great rejoicings, letting off many fireworks; and hired dancing girls; and paid for all this out of her money; and married her. And when she appealed to the judge, he was inclined at first to listen to her; but when he found that she had refused to accept the suggestion of Shere, he saw that compulsion had been a necessary thing. So the judge let her go easily, and with but a slight rebuke and much good advice, and received the presents of Shere Bhadn gracefully, for he was not just only, but of good manners. Then Shere Bhadn built himself a fine house with the wealth which he had acquired, and shut up his wife in a small room at the top, together with some other wives which he had. But he was a wicked man, nevertheless, and continued to kill all the flies, and the fleas, and other insects, so much that soon there was no insect to be felt in that house, except in the room of the widow of Odeah and of the other wives; for the widow of Odeah would have felt it a great sin to slay even the meanest of the insects which the English foreigners do not mention; and many insects fled to that part of the house for safety; and they were very thick in that part, which was blessed. And Shere Bhadn gave himself up to all manner of wickedness, insomuch that he took the sacred water brought from the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna, the water of Allahabad, and mixed it with "gin," which is a forbidden thing, and known to the English; even going so far as to make it hot, and to put with it lemon and bits of the sugar-cane, for Shere had learned many evil habits from the English.

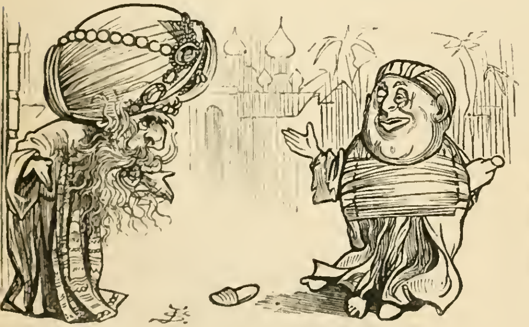
And there were three men, who were much afflicted at this wickedness in Shere; and these three men were Phattaz Bhutter the Brahmin, and Owkhouddee Bhee Dhurteer the holy Fakir, and Strangh Ghlum, a Thug, and the chosen devotee of Kali, who is most terrible and loves blood.



Now these three, who were fast friends and most holy men, communed together concerning the immorality of Shere, and resolved to try to bring him into the paths of the faithful; for Phattaz Bhutter the Brahmin was greatly grieved that he had not given to the Brahmins any gold, nor any fine raiment, nor rich feasts, nor any like things which the gods require. And the grief of Owkhouddee the Fakir was brought about by the thought of the wickedness of Shere in the slaying of all those insects; for great was the affection of the Fakir, as indeed it was meet that it should be, for fleas and other insects, the more particularly for the other insects, which loved him and stayed with him always. And the soul of the Fakir was grieved, furthermore, by the cleanliness of Shere's house, for it is right that men should humble themselves in the dirt (as the Fakir did), and in every variety of dirt; and to be cleanly is to be presumptuous and incur the anger of Brahma, of Vishnu, of Siva, and of the eighteen thousand seven hundred and seventy-nine lesser gods, who are blue and green and yellow, and have many hands among them, and even of the Great Brahm himself!

But the griefs of the Brahmin and the Fakir were as nothing beside the great indignation of Strangh Ghlum the Thug that the widow of Odeah had not been sacrificed to Kali, but had lived; for Strangh Ghlum was the chosen of Kali, who delights in death; and many were the victims that the holy man had dispatched from this world in her honour: so much so that he had made empty and unoccupied the houses of all his nearest neighbours, and was compelled to go into the next street for fresh offerings. And now Strangh pined for longing that he might offer to Kali her who had been snatched away.

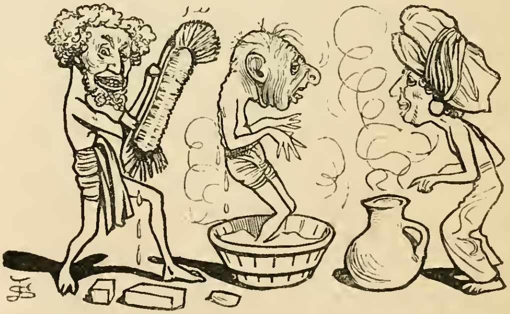
Then Phattaz the Brahmin went to the house of Shere, in the city of Benares, where they all dwelt, and reproved him. And Shere received the priest with much politeness, inviting him to take a mat, and served up a sumptuous repast for him (for Shere did not eat, seeing that it would not have been lawful for the priest to eat with one whose caste was unknown). And Phattaz ate of many strange dishes (but believing the word of his host, that they contained not the flesh of any animal or any such food as it is unlawful to eat), and enjoying them greatly. And in particular there was one dish of great savour, with onions and much pepper, and well known to the English, as Shere said; and drinks there were too, the more especially one which was named "Old Tom" among the English, but which the Brahmin (being many times assured that it contained nothing of that which intoxicates and is forbidden to the faithful) drank of with delight, feeling afterwards very happy, and in great high spirits; so much so that, when he had taken a hearty leave of his entertainer, he fell over three of the sacred bulls of Siva, one after the other, from very elation and gratitude to the gods.



About this time there was missed, from wandering to and fro in the streets, and lying across them in the shady places, one of the most sacred of those bulls which are the delight of the mighty Siva; and great consternation was in the city; and all the people made a great search after him, but he could not be found. So the people gave up the search and were troubled, especially Phattaz the Brahmin.

But of all those who were troubled, none was so troubled as Strangh the Thug, the servant of Kali; for he was so troubled that he took no rest until he had made empty and unoccupied two streets—one on the right of his abode and one on the left, and paused only because of the exceeding shyness that prevailed, insomuch that, when he approached, all the people would make with great haste round the next corner. And presently there was missed another bull, but the people said, "It is the doing of Siva himself," and were less troubled.

Now Phattaz the Brahmin continued to wonder greatly about this circumstance, but he was grateful to the gods—both to those that were blue and those that were red, or of other colours; and there remained in his mind the curious repast of which he had partaken at the house of Shere Bhadn; and there came within him certain doubts whether Shere had said truly that there was nothing forbidden in those things of which he had eaten and drunk; so he went again to the house and partook of them again, that he might be the better able to decide whether his doubts were justified; and he did this many times, but could not be certain; so he continued to do this. Shere had received the Fakir also with much politeness, and taken him into his inner courtyard, and had made his servants scrub him with many hot waters and with hard brushes seven times a day for seven days, until he was almost clean, and had put on him clean garments and sent him forth.



Then the unhappy Fakir, happening to catch sight of a part of himself, had perceived his skin, which he never had perceived until that day; and had not known what it was, and had given a great scream of fright, and wept, and hurried unto the bank of the Ganges, to that part where the mud is the muddiest; and had rolled himself in it many times until he could not be seen for muddiness; and he had vowed to stick pins into himself every day until he should be covered like a pincushion, to expiate the sin which he had done in being scrubbed clean.

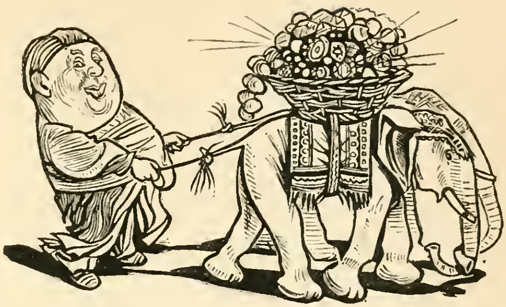
Strangh Ghlum the Thug also had been received with great politeness by Shere; but when he had asked that the widow of Odeah should be given up to him to strangle, Shere had put him off, and given him three female babies, which had somewhat comforted and appeased the Thug; but he was resolved to try again for the widow, and was still uneasy in his mind; for it was a selfish and impious thing for Shere to refuse the request of the holy man; but then Shere was an impious man in all things.

And from this time one holy fat bull was missed about every seventh day, and, by a coincidence, about every seventh day Shere invited many of the faithful, and gave them a great feast of many kinds of viands which were new to them; but they (being assured that the viands contained no flesh or other forbidden thing) enjoyed them.

And Phattaz the Brahmin went often, and ate and drank heartily, to make himself sure that there was truly no forbidden thing in the viands; and he grew most friendly with Shere, and stayed and learned to play at the pastime of "bowls"—little knowing that he played with the little sacred gods, for these had become so worn and round as not to be recognized.

But Shere had soon spent all his wealth, and owed much; and Phattaz did not know this.

So Shere took him aside one day, when they had drunk much "Old Tom," the drink of the English, and said, "I have a purpose in my mind to bestow a great and valuable offering upon the holy gods, through your hands. But it is seemly that I should feel that you have confidence in me before I give so great an offering; therefore I would have you give into my hands all the gold and the other treasures which are in your sacred temple, and let me go round the corner (so to speak) with them."

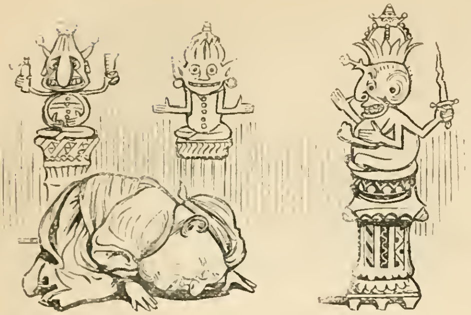


Then Phattaz the Brahmin was very joyful at this, and went in haste and loaded two elephants with the treasures from the temple, and gave these into the hands of Shere, and went home in great expectation.

And the next morning he went early to the house of Shere to receive the treasures of the temple, and also the great offering, taking three extra elephants in case of necessity; but it so chanced that Shere was not at home that morning; so Phattaz went away, and returned that evening, but Shere was not at home even yet.

Then, when he had called many days, Phattaz began to grow uneasy, and went to inquire of the gods in the temple about the intentions of Shere; and the gods, one and all, stared blankly at him, as if they were doubtful about it; so he grew more uneasy, and presently went again and inquired of the gods, who this time stared blankly at him, as though everything did not look right; and he went a third time, and then the gods stared blankly at him as if all were lost. Then the despair of the Brahmin was great, and his eyes were opened to the badness of Shere, and he went out in his rage and killed three Sudras, who are men of the meanest caste. And for this thing he had afterwards to do penance, for the gods are considerate of the Sudras, to kill one of which is as great a crime as to kill a flea or any insect. And Phattaz the Brahmin went and banged violently at the door of the wicked Shere, and demanded that the treasures should be returned; but Shere was not even yet at home.

So after Phattaz had exhausted all the power of persuasion and of threats, he was forced to have re-



course to a thing which is the fear of every man who has done any injury to another, and very crushing to him; for it is the custom for one, when another owes him a debt and will not pay it, to sit mourning at the door of that man, taking no food or drink, nor moving away, until the debt shall have been paid; and if it chance that he who sits mourning shall die so, then the sin of his death will be upon the head of the other; and this is very terrible to that other!

So Phattaz went early the next morning with no clothes, and sat down in the sun at the door of Shere in the most uncomfortable attitude which he could find, and ate and drank nothing all that day and night; and when Shere, not being yet at home, looked out of window next morning, there he was.

And Shere, who was an impious man, laughed within himself; so Phattaz called all those passing by and made them sit down and mourn with him, to increase the sin of Shere; and about half of the people in that city sat down in the most uncomfortable positions they could invent, and mourned.

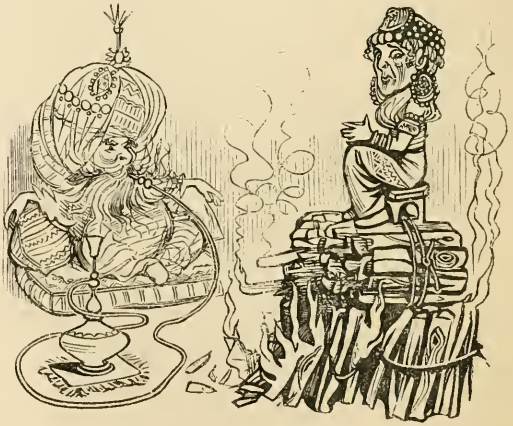
But that evening Phattaz the Brahmin grew tired of it, and slipped away in the darkness, and when the morning came, all the people who sat there saw that his place was vacant, and said, "Brahm has taken him to himself, and this thing will make it very hot for Shere!"

Then, on the fifth day, Shere Bhadn looked out of the window again; and suddenly his conscience smote him heavily, and the whole force of his sinfulness terrified him; and he became from that moment a changed man and very pious; and he thought at first to go quickly and give back the treasure to Phattaz and perform a great penance; but then he said, "No; there is only one punishment which is bad enough for me, and it were impious in me to attempt to avoid the doom which the gods have willed for me; therefore I will let these people sit, and the sin of their deaths shall be upon my head, as it is meet."

And he sat at a window, whence he could see the discomfort of those who mourned, and smiled patiently, for he was become a righteous man.

And those who sat without died off, a few at a time; but he bore this thing meekly.

Now, as he cast about how he might make reparation for his crimes, it occurred to him to deliver up the widow of Odeah to Kali, whom he had unjustly robbed of her; and he was at first minded to give her to Strangh Ghlum the Thug, but then he thought how it would be more edifying to sacrifice her as she should have been sacrificed at first. So he built a great pile of wood in his courtyard, and gilded it, and sent upstairs for the widow of Odeah; but again she had hidden herself away (having some suspicions) in a secret hole, and they had much ado to find her. Then Shere said to her, "Rejoice with me, for I have resolved to do that which is right, and you also shall assist me in that humble way which befits women."



Yet she did not see the thing in his light, but slipped away round many corners in succession, and was hard to catch. But they caught her, and placed her on the top of the pile, and lighted it at the bottom before she had time to slip down, and Shere smoked at great peace with himself.

But Strangh the Thug, when he heard of this thing, was so enraged at the slipping of the widow through his fingers, that he took no rest until he had empted seven more streets; but after this a great crowd got him, and dug a hole, and placed him in it with his heels highest, and filled up the top of it with clay, and sat upon it for some days, until they were quite sure.

Now when Phattaz the Brahmin had gone home, tired of sitting, he had in some way found out how those missing bulls had been killed and made into curious dishes by Shere; and Phattaz knew that he himself had eaten of those bulls; and he found out moreover that "Old Tom" was indeed an intoxicating and forbidden thing; and he also found out how he had played with the little sacred gods themselves, in the shape of bowls; and the wildness of that Brahmin was like the wildness of a whole city-full; and he went off with great leaps, though it was night, and sat down in his old place at the door of Shere, being resolved that he *would* die this time, for his hatred of Shere. And when Shere looked again out of the window, Phattaz smiled a dreadful smile of satisfaction: so they both smiled.

Now there was one sin more than all others which pained Shere, and this was the knocking off of the sacred little noses of those gods who were bowls. And one night he dreamed that all those little great gods came to him and told him that he should die, and that for his sins his soul should pass into the bodies of this animal and of that, and that all that treasure, and the wives which he had, and the remainder of the "Old Tom," should come into the possession of Phattaz the Brahmin. Then Shere prayed one thing: that his soul might be put into the body of one of the sacred alligators of the Ganges, for he had a certain design in his mind. And the gods promised him this pious wish.

Then when Shere awoke, he was filled with a new and most pious resolve, and built another great pile of wood, and gilded it; and sent upstairs for those wives which he had there, and set them all on the top of the pile. But they said, "There is some mistake! We ought not to presume to be burned until we are your widows. We will wait." But Shere said he would excuse their haste, knowing the piety which prompted them, and set fire very quickly to the pile, and was filled with a holy satisfaction. And by this time all the people who had sat mourning at his door had succumbed, excepting only Phattaz, who had again tired of it and gone home.

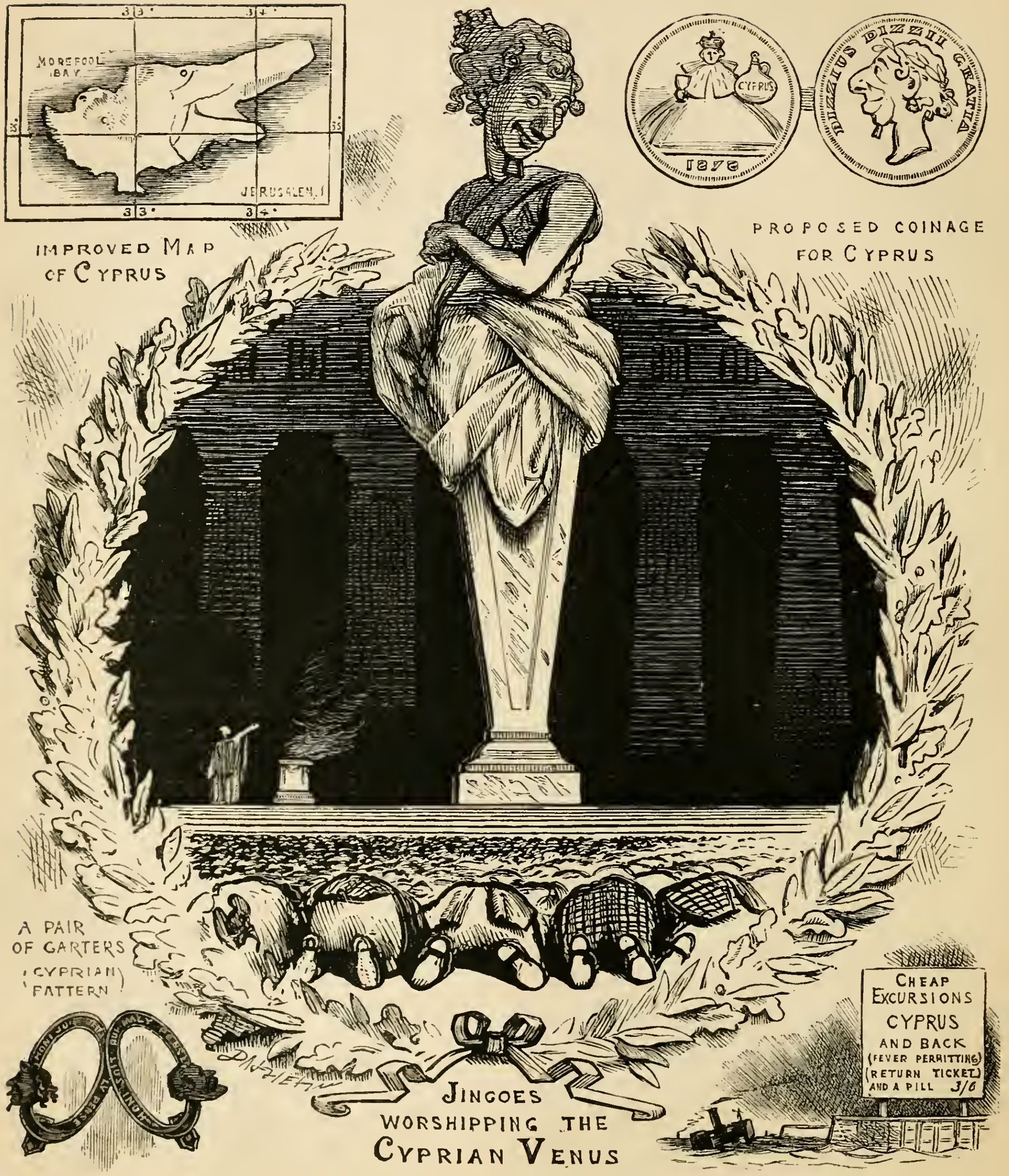
So Shere, being satisfied with the amount of his punishment (for it is a selfish and presumptuous thing for any man to want all the punishment that exists, robbing others of their share), sent for Phattaz, and gave to him all the treasures of the temple, together with more wealth which he had borrowed of others, and caused new noses of gold to be fitted to the little gods, and painted them with many colours. And Phattaz was so full of delight that he forgave all that affair of the meats and of the drinks, and they were great friends.

And that night the soul of Shere left him and went into the body of a sacred alligator; and the soul was full of a great plan; and that alligator loitered about that part of the bank of the Ganges nighest to the house of Phattaz the Brahmin, as if it watched for some one.

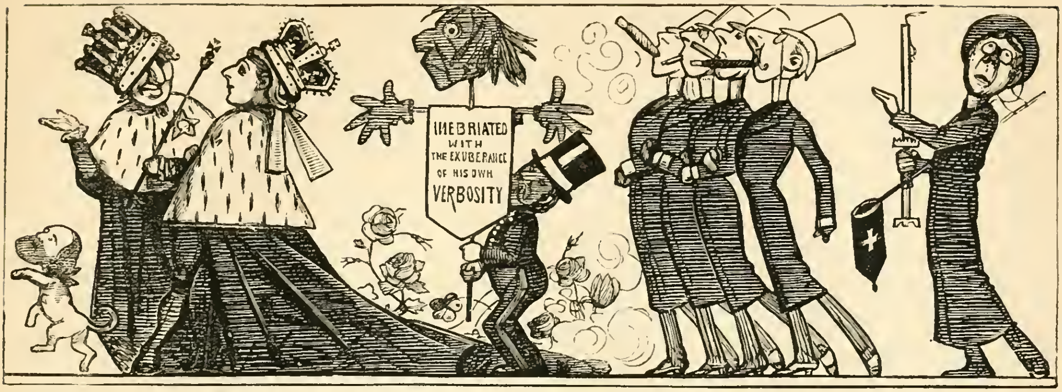
Now it chanced that Owkhouddee Bhee Dhurteer the Fakir wandered one dark evening on that part of the banks, seeking for mud still dirtier than that he had yet found. And he had covered himself completely with one coat of pins, and the dirt upon him reached up to their heads and covered them, so that he had begun to stick on an outer coating of pins in the mud above the first coating. And the kinds of dirt which covered him were dirtier and more various than ever before. And as he walked along there was joy in the eye of that alligator, as if of expectation. But when it had opened its mouth very wide, so that the Fakir walked into it in the darkness and was swallowed down, the alligator knew that it was the wrong taste; and there came over it a feeling of nausea and into its eye a disappointed melancholy which never departed from it. And Phattaz lived, and was protected by the little gods with the new noses of gold.

JAMES F. SULLIVAN.

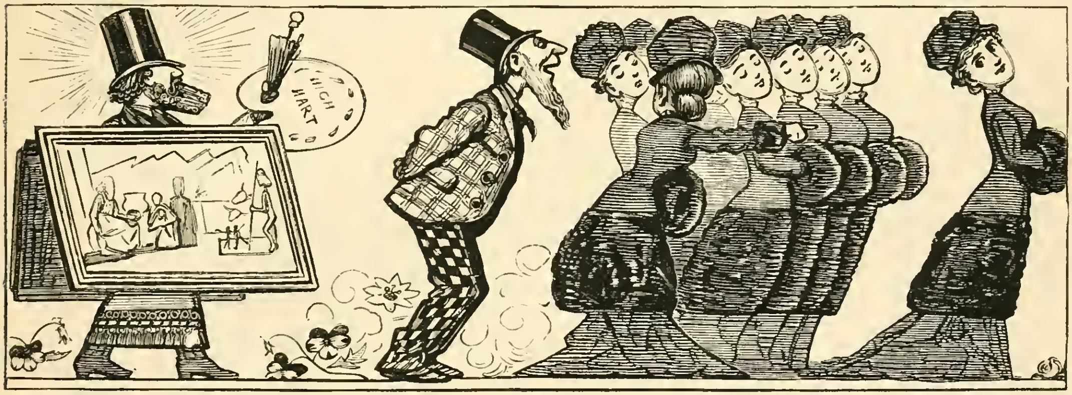
CYPRUS.


MOREFOOL BAY
JERUSALEM
33°
34°
35°
IMPROVED MAP OF CYPRUS
CYPRUS
1878
DIZZIUS DIZZII GRATIA
PROPOSED COINAGE FOR CYPRUS
A PAIR OF GARTERS (CYPRIAN PATTERN)
CHEAP EXCURSIONS CYPRUS AND BACK (FEVER PERMITTING) (RETURN TICKET AND A PILL 3/6
JINGOES WORSHIPPING THE CYPRIAN VENUS

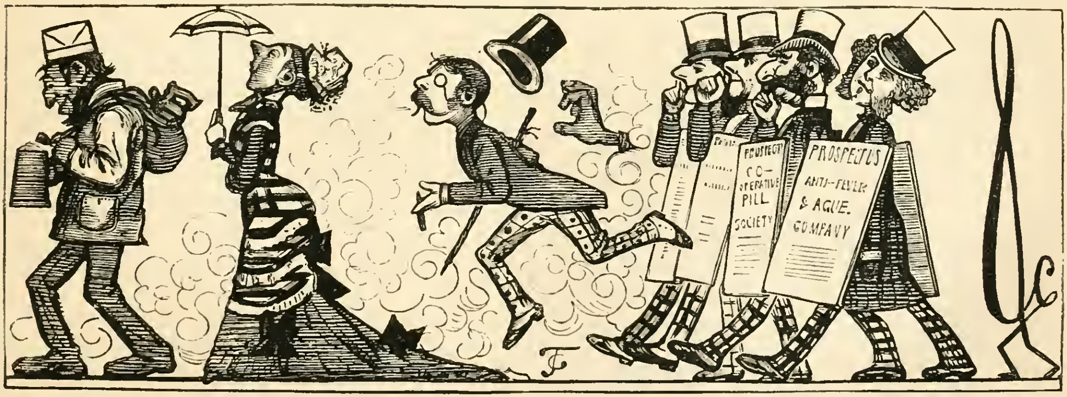
PROCESSION TO CYPRUS.


INEBRIATED WITH THE EXUBERANCE OF HIS OWN VERBOSITY

King Dizzy's "little wee dog"—Her Gracious Majesty going to see her new property—Bogey to frighten people into Dizzyism—Young Gentlemen who have tried everything here and failed, going to Cyprus to do likewise—Missionary, to enlighten the Cypriotes.



Distinguished Painter, to establish a "Royal Academy of Harts"—Members of London Mob, to teach politeness and the manners of good society—Sensation Loveliness, to show what *English* Venuses are like.


PROSPECTUS CO-OPERATIVE PILL SOCIETY
PROSPECTUS ANTI-FEVER & AGUE COMPANY

British Workman, because he hears that nobody works there, and that the drink is so strong—Matilda Seraphina, to see if the gentlemen of Cyprus have better taste than those of the British Isles—Tymkyns, to see what *he* can pick up—Tymkyns's Tailor, to pick up Tymkyns—Promoters of Joint-Stock Companies, Solicitors, Quacks, etc., etc., etc.

MAGNANIMOUS MATCH-MAKING.

NOW, had it not been for a Christmas card, these lines had never been penned, because it was by means of one of these Decembral extravagances they made her acquaintance. No; I'm wrong. A Christmas card was the medium that developed an inter-knowledge of the relative existence of such persons into a fateful friendship. Thus Jack Dawes and Percy Vere were introduced to Miss Ilfra Coombe, known familiarly in domestic and other circles as "Tots," at a quadrille party given by a mutual friend, where, in the following out of the programme and their destinies, both these gentlemen waltzed with her.

Well, after the ball the two young fellows lost sight of Tots for some time, till one day in the beginning of December, being at the house of the gentleman by whose means they had been brought together, her name (oddly enough, no doubt) chanced to be mentioned, and a few leading questions soon elicited her address. Walking home, Percy said to Jack, "I say, let's send Tots a Christmas card."

Jack agreed; and accordingly on Christmas Eve a highly-coloured production, the work of Mr. Percy, with appropriate verses by Jack, was sent off in an expansive envelope, addressed "Miss Coombe, Beaurivage, Sunbury."

When Tots received it she was hugely amused, and shortly after, showing it to the son and heir of the aforesaid mutual party friend, learned from him its originators. Now, Miss Coombe was a young lady who delighted in originality. She was original herself, and liked to see it in others (though, of course, she didn't *know* it when she did see it, and didn't *know* she liked it); so a couple of not altogether objectionable young fellows who showed so much idea of their own as to indite, draw, and otherwise manufacture a Christmas card "out of their own heads," as she termed it, naturally induced her to make such inquiries concerning them that the mutual friend's serviceable son volunteered to bring them down with him some day, to which, I need scarcely add, she assented. However, what with one delay and another, it was not until a sunny morning in May that he looked up Dawes and his chum at their chambers, and telling them to put some "flannels" in a bag, added that he was going to take them for a row with a couple of nice girls—Tots had a sister. The inquiries as to who they were being satisfactorily settled, the "flannels" duly ensconced in the bag, the three friends alighted at Sunbury Station on an eventful 22nd of May, about the hour of two p.m. Taken to Mr. Coombe's house and introduced to the family, they all went out for an afternoon's lounge on the river.

I will pass over that and many like visits, river picnics, water-parties, great and small, until these two young fellows came to be regarded as regular friends of the family. They went down there when they liked, stopped there when they liked; in fact, as far as the Coombe household was concerned, did as they liked. Mrs. Coombe was a second mother to them, as Beaurivage was a second and much more comfortable home. This state of affairs went on all that summer, nor did winter cool their acquaintance. They all used to go skating together, or would take the girls up to town to theatres or concerts, so perhaps on the whole the winter was as pleasant as the summer had been. *Hiems* passed, as did the spring, and by the time July first made moonlight rows practicable, Mr. Jack Dawes made to Mr. Percy Vere the extraordinary revelation that he thought he had fallen in love with Tots, which startling avowal was met by an equally surprising announcement on Percy's part that he too believed himself to be in much the same pretty position!

Here was a chance! A duel *à la mode!* Six-shooters! Goodwin Sands at low water! One mangled corse, and a semi-murderer coming back after a time and kneeling at the toes of a weeping Tots! But then I'm afraid she would have spoiled all romance by being so irritatingly matter-of-fact as to lock the dining-room doors on the outside, and to send for the police. No, they didn't do any of those things; they didn't even have a row and fling dumb-bells at each other! Percy had spoken last, and Jack simply remarked, "The devil!"

"Why," suddenly exclaimed Percy, "we 're rivals. Oh! come on!" and he took up a foil.

"Well," said Jack, "if you're in love with her——"

"No," put in the other, "I didn't say I *was*, I said I *thought* I was."

"And so did I," cried Jack; "I 'm not sure, bless you; neither are you. Oh, it 's all right! We 'll wait till we are."

And that very afternoon they went down to Sunbury arm-in-arm!

Of course the upshot of all this was that Jack and Percy did not take very much longer to decide they were *quite* in love with Tots. That was a settled thing. And it must also be confessed that though Miss Ilfra was strictly impartial with respect to our friends, she seemed to like them *together* far better than the other men of her acquaintance. And so it went on, each having his encouragement to fall more deeply in love with her. It had always been a rule between them never to spoil sport in any case, and the present formed no exception to the principle they had laid down and adopted.

One night, as they were returning home, extended as comfortably as a South-Western smoking-carriage will permit—both quiet—thinking, I suspect, of "the girl they'd left behind them"—each doubtless aware of the cause of the other's silence—when, to their intense disgust, some one got into the compartment they occupied. Oh, how in their hearts they cursed that unconscious youth! They couldn't, with him there, indulge in those "sweet thoughts far away" they had been previously enjoying. The presence of that young man seemed to break the spell of sympathy which had laid down an electric current of association between Beaurivage, Sunbury, and first-class carriage 152 B.

But the strange part of it all was, that though they couldn't reverie of Tots as before, owing to a *third* party being present, yet they knew each other's thoughts were identical. Maybe you'll advance that they couldn't have loved her very much, as there is no true love without jealousy in some degree, and knowing each other's feelings as they did, had they loved her as they imagined, it would have led, not exactly to a desperate struggle, but at least to a coolness between them. But they *did* love her, and they didn't quarrel; they were just as good friends as before—perhaps better, as now they had one common love, pursuit, and adoration! The intruder got out at Twickenham, and Dawes was just settling down to another "think," when Percy observed,

"Jack!"

"What?" he inquired.

"Do you think if you—if you asked Tots to be your wife, she would consent?"

Jack looked up at him for a moment, and then said, "Yes!" After a pause he added, "And if you asked her the same question, Percy, what sort of an answer do you think you would get?"

"Yes!"

It was some short time after this conversation that one evening Percy was busily engaged on a "block," when, on looking up, he observed Jack staring out into space with a most alarming expression of thought upon his countenance.

"Why, what on earth are you thinking so hard about?" he inquired.

"I was thinking that if you or I married Tots, what the lucky one would keep her on."

Percy jumped up, breaking the point of his pencil, "Jack, I never thought of that," he said, very seriously.

"No more did I till just now. Pleasant, eh?—'Mr. Coombe—In return for all your kindness to me I ask you to give me your daughter, that I may show my love for her by reducing her from comfort and elegance to a position little better than that of a servant-of-all-work, with more responsibility—herself, a large husband, and the possible contingency of a small family, on £200 per annum!'"

"What are we to do?" faltered Percy.

His friend smoked a short time in silence; then, half inquiringly, "Give up going down?"

Percy laughed an odd sort of laugh.

"'T is as hard for me as you," replied Dawes; "I'm just as hard hit as you are, but I see no other way out of it. Look here, Percy! if we keep up our present terms of relationship at Beaurivage, that girl, although she may not have shown it yet, is sooner or later bound to mark her preference for one of us. That she already likes us two better than the other fellows, I am sure. Well, the *happier* in that case will, in a moment of—what shall I say?—oblivion, get saying something serious to her. She will take it as meant, which *meant* in one sense it will be; but when it turns out to be altogether hopeless, think how jolly awkward it will be. See?"

"Ye-es! But what *are* we to do?"

"Well, I've just been thinking. If we continue our visits, we must take precautionary measures."

"What do you mean?"

"In this way. When one of us sees the other hanging too much about Tots, or misses him and her at the same time for long together, he must go in search, and on finding them remain in such a manner as we once should have called 'spoiling sport.' Thus, you see, one of us may have the opportunity of preventing the other making a fool of himself, and of stalling off Tot's chance of discovering which of us she likes best till she will naturally gradually lose that dual preference which seems to cost us so much anxiety."

"Ah!" said Percy; "a sort of Anti-Tots Mutual Protection League, Limited!"

And here were two strong big men binding themselves together in a bond of defence against a poor little harmless creature, whose coronet plait brought her on a level with the top button of my waistcoat, and who acknowledged to being tired after two turns round a moderately-sized room to the strains of the *Themselieder*, or any other waltz you may like to mention.

I have been lingering somewhat over the state of Jack's and Percy's feelings, with scarcely a word as to what Tots thought of them. Of course she knew they were fond of her; for the matter of that, so were all the fellows—but then she *owned* to being fonder of our two friends than all the others put together.

I think, after all, we had better ask her sister.—Will Miss Mabel Coombe have the kindness to disclose anything her sister may have confessed concerning the state of her feelings with regard to Messrs. Dawes and Vere?

Miss Katie Coombe will have much pleasure.

In the first place, Tots had repeatedly admitted she liked the gentlemen in question "best of all." Secondly, Vere was a prettier name than Dawes, and Ilfra Vere didn't sound at all badly. Thirdly, she thought Percy did not give vent to quite as much playful sarcasm at her expense as Jack did. Fourthly, that Jack seemed to think more of her—to show her more little attentions than Percy did. Fifthly, Percy was the better looking. Sixthly, she thought *Jack* would make the better husband—one who would let his wife have more of her own way. And, seventhly, she didn't *love* either—but she thought she liked Jack a tiny bit the better, but she was a stupid little thing, and wasn't quite sure, and she wouldn't show it!

Will Miss Mabel accept our most grateful acknowledgements for her important communication?

With their diabolical plan in their heads, the two friends visited Sunbury for the next month, and it worked with gratifying success. Although, sometimes, when one found himself looked after so assiduously, a shade of annoyance might have just passed over him, he directly understood all about it; Jack, or Percy, was never alone with Tots for long but the other was sure to come upon them. One never went on the water with her without the other, and neither went to Sunbury *solus*. It was an odd sort of arrangement on their parts. They couldn't bring themselves to give up seeing her, which, I suppose, under the circumstances, was selfish and wrong; and yet they were not so selfish but they endeavoured to take steps that their gratification should not be fraught with danger to the origin of it.

However, one afternoon, while at Sunbury, Percy had a telegram requiring his presence in town, and Jack, who had wisely determined to accompany him, was, by the united entreaties of the "Tots" family, but too easily, prevailed on to remain. As he was leaving, Percy said to Jack,

"If you go on the river to-night, mind! there's a moon; so be sure you take Mabel with you." And then he left him to his fate.

They *did* go on the river, and there *was* a moon, but they took Mabel with them. When they came off she went indoors, and Jack busied himself putting the sculls and cushions away, while Tots waited for him on a rustic seat placed under a weeping ash, a seat solely and wholly "for talking age and whisp'ring lovers made." After he had locked up the boat-house, instead of insisting on their following Mabel's example, he went and sat down also, saying—he blames it all on the moon—

"As water finds its own level, Tots, so I find my way back to you."

"Always on the water," she exclaimed. "But how romantic you are! Why! I thought you considered yourself immeasurably superior to me."

"Love levels all, if I did," he whispered.

"Levels!" she echoed. "I thought the course of love never ran *smoothly* under any circumstances!"

"What a grand institution moonlight is," he said. "And the river! I think the only poet who came nearest describing Elysium was he who wrote

> "With indolent fingers fretting the tide,
> And an indolent arm round a darling waist!"

"How many darling waists has your indolent arm been round in its time?" she murmured.

"None!"

"Where is it now?"

"Oh, Tottie dear!" he said, squeezing her closer, "I wish I had a thousand a year."

"Why?" she archly asked.

"Because then I'd marry you."

"But I wouldn't have you," she said.

"Yes, you would! Yes, you would!" And just then Mabel came and told them tea was ready.

When Jack saw Percy the next morning he made a clean breast of the affair, but his soul did not derive that benefit from the confession the proverb might have led him to expect. He admitted the justice of Percy's reproaches, but denied all responsibility for his action. It was all the moon!

"Oh, Percy!" he cried, "I wish you'd marry her; I could shake hands with her as your wife."

"Nothing would give me greater pleasure," returned his friend; "but unfortunately I can't. Indeed, after the unfortunate occurrence of last night, I doubt if she'd have me. But to the point,—did you make her a *bonâ fide* offer?"

"No!" replied Jack, brightening at what seemed a glimmer of hope—(strange thought to brighten at!)—"no! I only told her I should like to, and—and—she didn't say she wouldn't."

"Well," said Percy, "you furnished good advice on a former occasion, which *was* followed by the recipient; it is now my turn. You have probably noticed, Jack, how all the eligible *partis* who used to go to Beaurivage have fallen off in their visits during the latter part of our acquaintance there. Now, what is the cause of that? *We* are the cause. Some of those fellows went there with certain ideas, but, fancying from the manner *we* were received they stood no chance, have honourably taken themselves off, leaving us a fair field, not unaccompanied by a considerable amount of favour. We, who with similar ideas, owing to circumstances, are unable to put those ideas into tangible form——you follow?"

"Go on!" said Jack.

"Now, look here," resumed Percy: "if we continue our visits, which it seems beyond our moral power to forego so long as Tots' name is Coombe, we keep all others out. Does not that strike you as a jolly shame? The girl might go on, aimlessly circled by you and me, till she have no chance of being married at all. Say what you like, marriage is woman's mission, and Mr. and Mrs. Coombe, though of course not anxious to part with their dear little daughter, would, in her own interests, like nothing better than to see her fulfilling her destiny, and happily and comfortably settled. So, my boy, as matters stand, if only in return for their great kindness, it devolves upon *us* to find some one who *can* make her happy and comfortable, and who can take this load off our hearts. We're the moths and she the candle. As it is useless striving to keep the moths from the light, the light must be taken from the moths. In other words, we must find Ilfra Coombe a husband."

"What!" cried Jack. "Turn matchmakers! Oh! *Ex luce lucellum!*"

"Matchmakers or not, as you will. That is what in all honour and fairness we must do."

"Yes; but don't you reckon without your host?

Suppose she doesn't take to the husband found for her, whoever he may be. What then?"

"That is as it may be. We must take our chance of that. What I maintain is that we must do our utmost to repair the—I was going to say, injury, but let the word pass—caused by our—our—terms are so difficult to find!—our selfishness. Come, do you think she could be brought to give you up without dying of decline?"

"I dare say," said Jack, in all modesty.

"Then this is what I propose doing. There's Tommy Hawkes, one of the best fellows living. Good-looking, plenty of money, and a brick! Well, we'll get him to come down to Kingston for a row, go up as far as Sunbury, then land at their garden, telling him we'll introduce him to some jolly people. They're sure to ask him down again, and he is as sure to fall in love with Tots—every one does, you know. (*"Yes!"*) And then we must play our cards sufficiently well as to make it a case of—of 'no cards.' In fact, to get him to marry her, and *vice versâ*. What do you think of my plan?"

"It is all very good—*too* good—and I suppose we must adopt it," said Jack, moodily; "but really, in my heart, I don't think I should grieve to see it fail."

"No, hang it!" cried Percy. "That *is* selfish. I'm just as much singed as you are; so cheer up, work with a will, and we shall perhaps have the gratification of seeing our stratagem successful, and of two weak minds doing a magnanimous action."

So Mr. Hawkes went with them to Kingston for a row; he was taken to Beaurivage and introduced; he was asked to come again; and he went away raving of Tots, to the mingled gloom and satisfaction of our male matchmakers.

Tommy, after that, became a constant visitor at the Coombes', Jack and Percy doing all in their power to bring about what they had set their minds upon. It would have been rather amusing for any one cognizant of the plot to have watched the little manœuvres the pair had recourse to in the furtherance of their dark design. They commenced by leaving their unconscious victims alone together, and doing all they could to keep them so, for any length of time; always talking of both in the same breath, coupling their names in a sort of off-hand natural manner, until people, supposing them to be of course well posted up in the family arrangements, began to take it for granted that Tots and Tommy were destined ere long to become a unit. This idea, as it imperceptibly took hold of and pervaded the minds of all, was inevitably insensibly communicated to Tots, till *her* mind became vaguely imbued with some such similar though undefined notions, causing her after a bit to deem it as a not impossible contingency, and in time to drift gradually into taking it for granted that things were so ordained and so to be. Another point in favour of it was that she, mindful of and piqued at Jack's gloomy and graduating quasi-coolness, attributing it, of course, to anything but the real cause—she had been certain of her *preference* since that eventful evening—at first solaced her woman's soul with the conventional woman's solace under such circumstances, viz., taking up with another in order to bring the first back to his sterner sense of duty; *and as Jack didn't return*, in comforting herself with Hawkes she grew to like him very much indeed,—he was a capital fellow. The two schemers worked upon *him* too in a manner which led him to believe that he was not regarded with total aversion in the little quarter where he long deposited his rather impulsive affections; but they never tackled Tots personally. At length Mr. and Mrs. Coombe, though somewhat surprised it had not been Jack or Percy, cheerfully adopted the views conveyed to them by people who had been tampered with by the conspirators, and a sort of tacit engagement between the young folks was agreed upon by the outside public. All this had its consequent subtle influence upon the mind of one of the most interested parties, and Percy's kind arrangements for her future were prevented from failure by Tommy's proposing to Tots, and her unconditional acceptance of him.

They were now formally engaged, and to all appearance transcendently happy—Jack and Percy being proportionately dismal. They tried to comfort themselves, however, with the assurance they had done right, and that it was all for the best, but still they *were* dismal. They didn't go to Sunbury so often—they even passed the campshed occasionally without landing. But if Jack and his friend absented themselves, Hawkes was there, and their conclusion was they would only have been in the way, and they never spoiled sport. One day, when they went down, Tots had gone to London to have something "tried on." That was enough. They suddenly recollected important engagements at the Foreign Office, and left almost directly. They went back to their rooms feeling very low-spirited, and had just settled down to a lugubrious pipe, when Jack discovered a blue-enveloped letter addressed to himself. He opened it in a listless manner, which changed as he read the contents :

"1001 GRAY'S INN SQUARE,
"15*th Sept.*, 187—.

"SIR,—We much regret to have to convey to you the sad intelligence of the sudden demise of our much-lamented client, your late uncle, Mr. Thomas Dawes, at his station near Bhurtwar, in the Punjaub. At the same time we hasten to inform you, you are left residuary legatee and sole executor under his will, some time confided to our keeping. We know of no other document of a similar nature bearing a more recent date, nor do our agents out there, from whom we have received this information per Indian telegraph. We shall, no doubt, have fuller details by the next mail.

"Awaiting any instructions you may be kind enough to honour us with,
"We are, Sir,
"Your obedient servants,
"NARRAWAY AND STRAIGHT.
"John Dawes, Esq."

He threw the letter over to Percy ; then, folding his arms upon the table, drooped his head upon them. Percy read the news, and seeing what was coming, was in a terrible fix. He didn't speak for some time, while something very like a sob shook poor Jack's frame. He pretended to be reading over the letter : his usual readiness failed him. What should or could he say? At last, in sheer desperation, he blurted out,

"Why, Jack! this is your Uncle Tom, who quarrelled with his family when quite a boy, and went out to India."

"Oh, Percy!" groaned Jack, "why didn't I know this six months ago? It is too late now."

"Come, come, Jack, be a man! I thought you were getting over that."

"I thought I was perhaps in a fair way of doing so, but this has brought it all on again. Oh, why did I ever take your advice?" Advice again!

"Jack," said Percy gently, "that is unkind."

Jack looked up and took his hand.

"That's right!" continued the other, "why, you *began* to get over it, and if you could do that then, surely you can do it again now. Come, cheer up! Comfort yourself with the assurance that however it has turned out with regard to yourself—a result no one would have ever dreamed of—you did a right and good action. You were very fond of that girl; there was no possibility of your marrying her yourself, so you sacrificed your own feelings to the future welfare and happiness of the woman you loved. 'Tis a love to be proud of, and its own reward!"

And Jack did cheer up after a time. They have both got over their disappointment now, and though when Tots was married, the uncle's affairs had *inopportunely* called Jack abroad, and Percy accompanied him, they conjointly sent her the best and most useful present she received.

Mrs. Hawkes, *née* Coombe, never understood how it was that Jack seemed to diverge at an obtuse angle from her after that pleasant evening in the moonlight, and no one ever knew but that her wedding came about in the most ordinary manner possible; little dreaming it was all owing to the machinations of our *Magnanimous Matchmakers.*

CYRIL MULLETT.

MY OTTER HUNT.

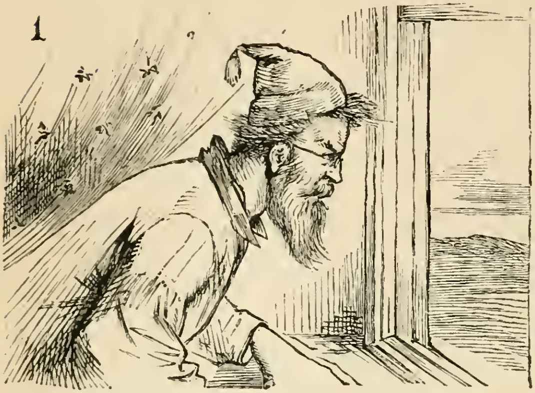
One morning in July last I received the following:—

"My dear Esau,—*Mr. Thingumbob's otter hounds meet at Whatdyecallum Bridge next Monday morning at 4 a.m. Come and join in the fun.*

"*Yours truly,*

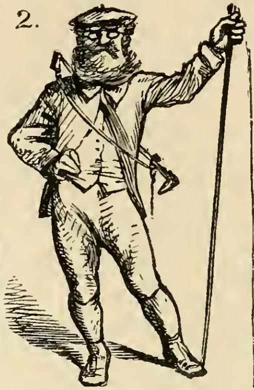
"Nimrod."

I went, I "joined in the fun," and I recorded my experiences, and these are of them:—



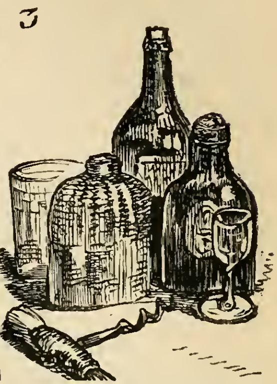
1

I prospect the weather. Quite a new sensation to me to see how the world looks before being properly aired.



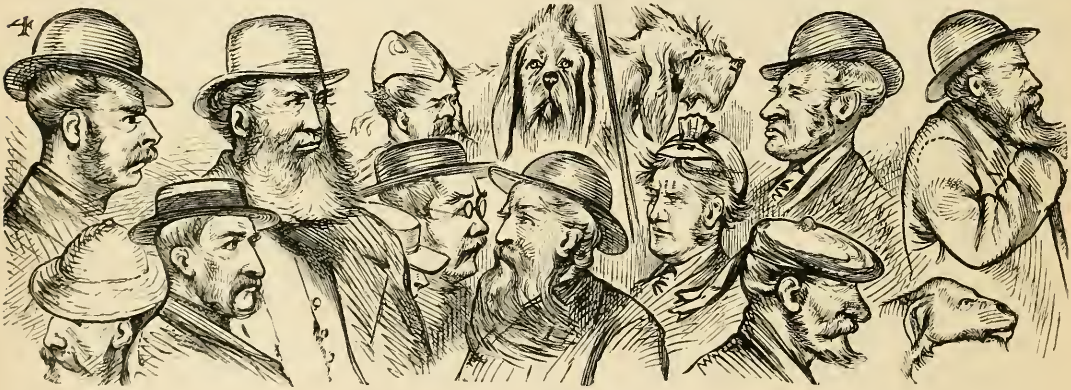
2.

I get myself up, "according to Cocker," and fancy myself the considerable Stilton.



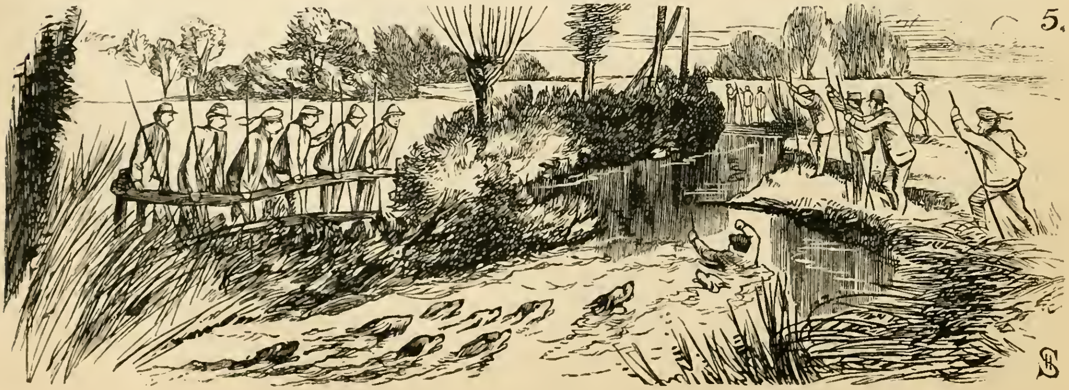
3

Study of fortification; not unnecessary under the untimely circumstances.



4

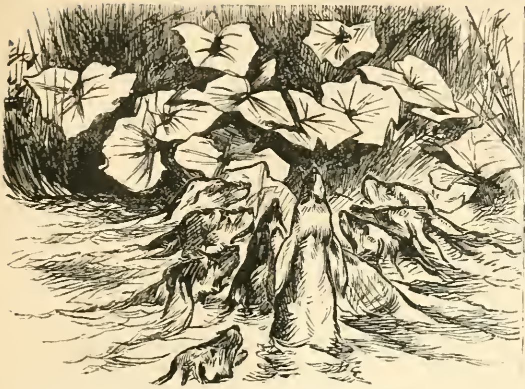
A leaf out of my sketch-book at the "meet."



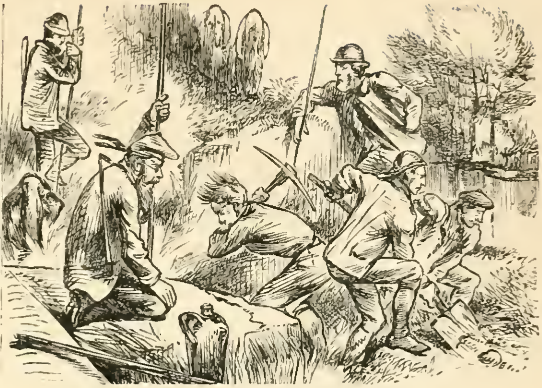
5.

After a weary paddle up a wet ditch for a mile or more—

MY OTTER HUNT.

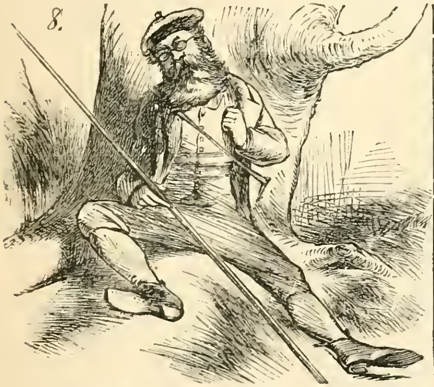


A "find" is proclaimed; what the long-haired hounds have found beyond a gutter-hole in the bank I fail to perceive.



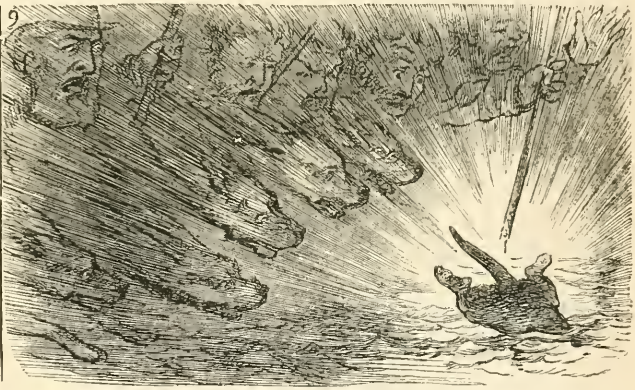
Crowbars, spades, and pickaxes are put into requisition; but, as my education in the manipulation of those tools is, to say the least, elementary, and I being, as some of my friends tell me, one of the numerous tribe of the "Go-ons,".

8.



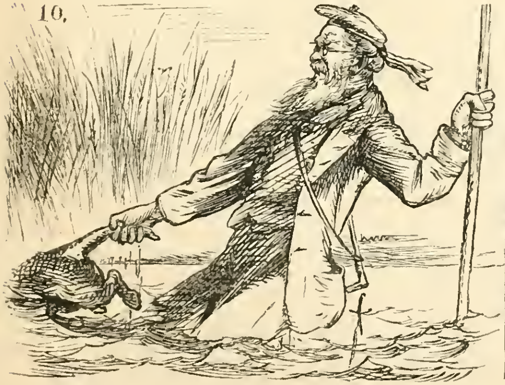
I betake myself to the shade of a friendly tree for forty winks,

9.



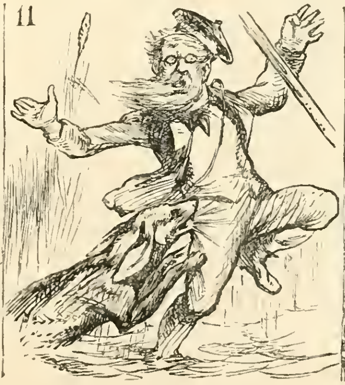
Out of which I am electrified by maniacal yells and shouts from man and dog—"Bolt!! Hie gaze!!! Bow-wow!!!!

10.



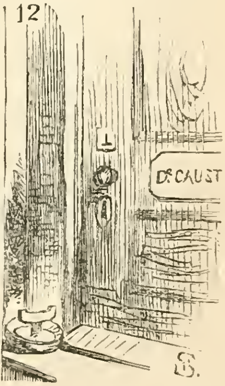
Having read of the pleasures of "tailing" an otter, I essay the performance,

11.



To the irritation of one of the hounds, which "tails" me in return.

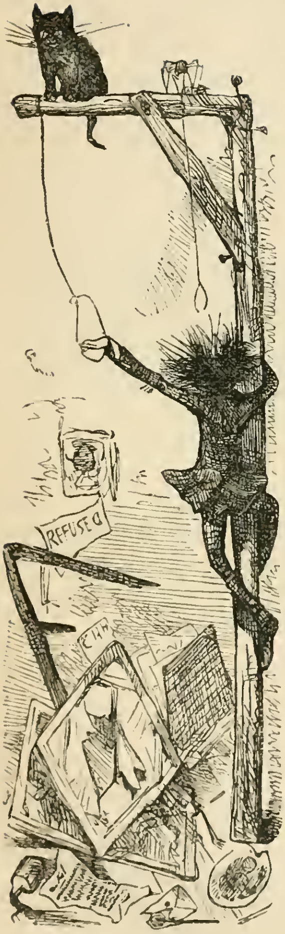
12



Comment is needless! The scenes transacted within these portals are too horrible for representation!! Cauterization is *not* a matter for joking!!!—P. S.—I shall not be prepared to go out a-hunting the wily otter again for a time.

QUILTER CHAFFERS.

His First Effort and his Last Chance.



THE father of Gentle Chaffers, as he was called, was a tailor; and he very naturally expected his only son would follow the same honourable calling.

The boy's name was "Nero," or more properly, "Jasper Nero," and by these names his father, when he wished to be very correct and proper, always addressed him. Now, Jasper and Nero, though there may be some difference of opinion on this point, are really in themselves very good names, and when combined do not sound badly; yet, by some strange roundabout way which it is impossible for me to describe, not being good at puzzles, they became, in this case, corrupted into "Gentle," and the boy was known to his friends and acquaintances by that name.

When Gentle Chaffers approached man's estate—by the way, I may as well now inform the reader that Gentle Chaffers was the father of my hero: pray pardon the parenthesis—as Mr. Chaffers approached man's estate, he gradually contracted rather strong political opinions, and became addicted to attending meetings where "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" were freely discussed and advocated; he now "mixed," as he termed it, "unreservedly among his-fellow men." His views became very broad, and one fine morning, with the object of carrying out his pet theory, I suppose, clandestinely married Miss Clarissa Thumps, the daughter of a noble-minded gentleman who at this time happened to be the ruling genius of a small tavern in the neighbourhood of Clare Market. This is how Quilter's father and mother got married, and in due time Quilter Chaffers was born.

Now, there is an old adage which says "It is the clothes that makes the man." As in this sense Quilter's father had spent all his working hours in "making men," and his mother had spent all her working hours in drawing—beer, what more natural than he should wish to be an artist?—an historical painter? His great ambition was to paint some grand work, "showing how great deeds of valour had been done by brave men dying in their country's cause."

This may be a convenient place to mention that the star of Mr. Quilter Chaffers had not been one of the first magnitude: the fact of his father having married without *his* father's sanction or approval, that gentle, timid democrat was thrust from the paternal roof to fight his way in the wide world as best he could; nor was the staunch and sturdy parent of his darling one whit more tender. When Mr. Thumps became aware of the fact that his charming Clarissa was now Mrs. Gentle Chaffers, his wrath rose to its maximum height, and after giving utterance to a variety of very carefully-selected words, more weighty than polite, he called into practice some playful athletic movements, in which he exhibited considerable skill. The consequence was that the floor of the room where they were discussing this interesting family matter appeared to rise up, and come in sudden and very forcible collision with the back of Mr. Gentle's head.

The next morning his face showed strangely out of shape, and about his eyes were many colours; his vision also was slightly affected for several days: as it happened, his mental vision recovered by a more rapid process than his physical, and so he quickly found, to his dismay, that he was fairly out in the cold—deserted by his own parents, disowned by those of his newly-married wife, this poor little Republican with a big soul, this Jasper Nero Chaffers, found himself in a rather awkward position; and what was worse, found very few people, if any, that would carry out the principles of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" when it came to the practical part of helping a friend that was down. Yet with all this against him, he met his fate like a man, and did his best in the trade that his father taught him to make provision for his wife and child.

But it is not our business to record the domestic history of Mr. Gentle Chaffers, and we have only gone thus far to show that the home and early life of our hero was little calculated to foster the burning genius of a great soul like that which animated the little body of Quilter. I do not hesitate to express my own belief that Q. C. was a born artist, and, had he possessed fair advantages, might have climbed the ladder of Fame with a tolerably firm step, and as true an eye as many of the *good* men of our day. This, Fortune had decreed, should not be his lot.

Though his soul scorned all other occupation, Art—only Art—could he bear to contemplate! Yet was he compelled every day to endure many hours of labour as an errand-boy to an Italian warehouse—whatever that may be! His only school for study was the print-shop window, his only means of practice was making sketches of his father or mother as they sat at work. Although every available shilling was spent in purchasing materials to prosecute his studies, yet he lacked, and yearned for sufficient means to purchase A LARGE CANVAS, whereon he might paint a grand historical picture. He only wanted the necessary materials: he already possessed the genius! Quilter *never* doubted *that*. "Give him the wherewithal to show his power and success was certain."

Thus several years passed by—hoping! fearing! yearning! desponding!—yet always full of self-confidence. "When his chance came, would not he let them see what stuff he was made of!"

At the close of a long summer day, which he had spent rambling about Hampstead Heath, and the adjacent fields that lay, at that period, between the high ground and mighty London—moody and discontented with himself and everything else in the world—he reached the main road on the south side of Regent's Park. A few steps, and he kicked aside what appeared to be a piece of dirty paper lying on the margin of the pavement. Some feeling of curiosity induced him to turn and pick it up; to his amazement, he found this dirty bit of paper to be a five-pound note! The first question—"What was he to do with it?"

This knotty point gave him much anxiety, and at least two sleepless nights; the distressing question came again and yet again, What was he to do with it? At length, with a fine sense of right, he resolved, and, to his honour be it told, he went every day for seven days and stood upon the very spot where he had found the money, for seven hours in each day, with the note carefully folded in his pocket, ready to give it up to any one who should prove satisfactorily that the note was his; but no one did demand it of him, nor did he, he declared, see any during all the time that looked as though they had lost anything of greater importance than their own brains.

During the interval of watching, he came to the conclusion that there were more empty skulls than empty pockets in the world, which sage reflection shows that our hero was not entirely without brains himself.

After this laudable and unsuccessful endeavour to find the rightful owner of the treasure, he considered himself fairly entitled to keep it; and this he did for a time, but only for a very short time. What was he to do with it? Ha! now was his chance; now would the yearnings of his heart be satisfied! Now would he purchase a large canvas, paints and brushes, and astonish the world with his grand historical work! He'd paint a picture such as man had never yet set eyes on. As to his success, it is not necessary here to express an opinion; the public at large, to the best of my knowledge, never had an opportunity of expressing theirs.

It may be interesting to the reader of this brief sketch if I give some idea what this great work was like. I confess to approaching the subject with diffidence, yet the reputation of poor Chaffers demands this much of me, that those art critics who choose to take the trouble may be able to say whether it ought, or ought not, to have found a place in our National Gallery.

The principal incident was intended to represent the triumphal entry of the Allied Sovereigns into Paris; the most prominent figure was meant for the Duke of Wellington, but the painter's model for this had evidently been his own father while he was busily plying his needle and thread, and this man, in the flesh was about as like the "hero of a hundred fights" as his dwelling was to Apsley House, except, indeed, that they both were short men; but what was the poor artist to do? If he could not get the best, he must needs use the best he could get! This group, the Duke on horseback, with two or three attendant Generals, occupied almost the entire length of the picture; as accessories he ingeniously introduced on one side a grand conflagration, intended to represent the burning of Moscow; on the other side was a fierce battle, with a superabundance of smoke: this was intended for the Battle of Waterloo; while in the middle distance was a male figure standing upon the edge of a rock, his arms folded across his breast, apparently watching the sun as it sank in glowing red below the horizon of the sea: this, the reader will easily understand, was intended for Napoleon at St. Helena.

As we well know these circumstances did not all occur at the same moment of time,—and I am not by any means certain that the last-named incident ever did occur in the way here represented,—yet is it not admitted by all great minds that the true evidence of real genius is shown in its triumph over petty literal facts and small details? and in the poetry of painting, as in the poetry of language, the author must carry the work to consummation according to the design of his own lofty intellect. I ought to mention in this description of the picture that, in the sky, the painter had introduced some strangely formed and as strangely coloured clouds, which he said represented "the guardian angels of the world, bearing crowns of laurel wherewith to deck the manly brows of these, the gallant and the brave!"

Mr. Quilter Chaffers was very much surprised and very wroth when informed that it would be necessary he should put his picture in a gilt frame before it could be accepted for exhibition at the Royal Academy. Poor little man! he chafed himself to fury under the restriction, or, as he termed it, "insult to genius," until he bodly declared "he would himself carry his noble work *unframed* to the gallery," and "beard these purse-proud lions in their den"—what he meant by this form of expression the writer of this brief history is altogether unable to explain. "He would carry his picture into their noble halls, and let them reject it *if they dare!*" He did leave his picture, "unframed," at the doors of their "noble halls," and spent the intervening time until the "opening day" in a state of restless anxiety.

At length the all-important morning arrived, and Quilter, "drest all in his Sunday best," full three long hours before the doors were opened, bent his way with hurried steps, that he might be among the first to enter the gallery, in the full assurance that the high place of honour would be given to the great picture he had painted.

Poor Quilter Chaffers! fatal was the hour when he picked up that five-pound note—fatal was the day when he purchased the "large canvas and brushes"—and still more fatal to him was that first Monday in May, when the doors of the Royal Academy opened to receive its visitors. Chaffers entered the first room with as much indifference as he could command, and, with a single glance at each wall, saw that his picture was not there. He did not expect it would be; for in that room the place of honour was not. He passed quickly on to the next—not there!—and so to each room of the gallery, with the same result. As he reached the last, his poor heart sank within him—*his picture was not there!* The place of honour was filled with a small picture : the portrait of a monkey cracking nuts, surrounded by a large gilt frame. Again and again he went through the rooms, each time making closer inspection, lest his eye should have overlooked his work amid the "blaze of gilded nothings." No ! it was not there ! Sick at heart and nearly fainting, he leant for a few moments against a doorway. This fainting was quickly followed by a mental phrenzy, that for a time deprived him of all self-control. He rushed from the room, and demanded of the doorkeeper—"Why his picture was not hung ?" This man, with perfect indifference, referred him to the porter at the receiving-door. Here again, in high-pitched voice, he repeated the question—"Here, you fellow ! why has my picture not been hung ?"

The man he addressed was a good-hearted fellow, and doubtless had seen many a disappointed youth come nervously seeking for the picture that had "not been hung." He now said a kindly word to Quilter, which soothed him slightly, and went away to look for the work. With little search he found it. When brought forth, Quilter again demanded to know—"*Why* it had not been hung upon the walls of the exhibition, when there was not a single picture there at all to be compared, for true artistic soul, to this rejected gem ?"

This kindly-hearted man seemed puzzled for a moment; at last he looked his questioner in the face with a gentle conciliatory smile, and said,

"Why, it arn't got no frame. You see, sir, we never hang no pictures here what arn't got ne'er a gilt frame on it."

Happy thought! thrice-happy thought! Poor Quilter Chaffers clung through life to that theory. His picture was rejected not from want of merit, of that he was himself well satisfied, but it had been declared to him by the representatives of the Royal Academy—a real Royal Academician, for aught he knew to the contrary—that it was rejected because it had not got a gilt frame.

This was Quilter Chaffers' first venture : we have told you how it failed; we will now relate his last chance.

"The youth whose aspirations all were bold,
Now shrinking down the shrivelled man and old."

The gap that lay between these epochs of his life—these wellnigh four decades of years—had more of pain than pleasure, more of homeless wanderings in the dark night, than plucking roses in the sunny day. There was an even downward tendency, and though he tried his best, and manfully fought against the adverse tide of fortune, he could not roll *his* barrel up the hill.

One cold wet day—he had now become sadly down in the world—after wandering about the streets for many dreary hours, he stood, with wistful look and hungry eyes, before the window of a "ham and beef shop :" how long he could not tell. At length, with a weary sigh, being perfectly sensible of the empty state of his pocket, he turned away, and had taken scarcely half a dozen steps, when he became conscious that a face which recalled long-past days was standing before him, and a clear, cheery voice cried out,

"Why, it 's Chaffers ! Quilter Chaffers ! Quilter, old boy ! how are you ? How are you getting on ? You don't look very jolly. But come along with me, old fellow, and tell me all about your doings these many a day since we have met."

Before poor bewildered Quilter could reply, or thoroughly understand what he was about, the stranger hurried him into the eating-house, ordered some food, which he insisted upon Quilter doing justice to before he spoke a word. When the hunger was satisfied—the poor fellow had been very hungry—these two men sat a long hour in earnest, quiet talk, Quilter relating the "story of his life," his fitful success, his constant failure, the gleams of hope, his bitter disappointment, and all the ills he had endured since they were thoughtless boys at school together. That night he slept on a softer and a warmer bed than he had known for many a day.

This friend of his schoolboy days, now, in his almost hopeless adversity, proved himself a good and true friend indeed. He found him employment, poor and humble enough in all conscience. Yet it was with great joy that Quilter entered upon a situation as runner and general drudge in the paint-room of one of our principal theatres, where he had many opportunities of relating his strange adventures during a long and chequered life in this wilderness of London, and his many shifts to keep body and soul together.

He had always been a sort of hanger-on about the outskirts of Art. He was well versed in the practice of lithography, having at a certain period of his life drawn much upon stone, but his works in this department of art were never printed—unless, indeed, the boots of the passers-by might have taken rough impressions of these "gems" after he had retired from the scene of his labours for the night.

It must in candour be confessed that Quilter sent forth a frequent and by no means a timid growl against society, and especially against that part of society known as the Royal Academy, which institution he never forgave for having rejected his grand picture of "The Entry of the Allied Sovereigns into Paris," simply because it had not got a gilt frame: he maintained it was a corrupt combination of men who professed one course of action and pursued another; that, every man, on being elected an Academician, bound himself by solemn vows, he would, for the remainder of his life, take every opportunity of crushing youthful genius, whenever and wherever he might find it; at the same time avail himself of every chance to proclaim with a loud voice that the doors of the Academy stood ever open, ready to admit all who pleased to seek instruction there; that it was the true guardian of all Art interest: everything that had been done, and everything that ever could be done for Art in this country, was and would be entirely owing to the noble and disinterested efforts of the Royal Academy.

"Fostering true genius, forsooth!" Quilter would exclaim, with wild gesticulation, after uttering fierce denunciations on the Institution—"foster rising genius, forsooth! Look at me! look at me!" dashing his hand rapidly through his hair; then throwing his arms about in a frantic manner, he repeated over and over again, "look at me! look at me!"—each time his voice growing more shrill and wild—"look at me! Here 's an instance of their fostering care! Ha! ha! very tender fostering care indeed! —Only look at me!"

Throughout the greatest part of his struggling life, Quilter picked up occasionally a few shillings by sitting as a model to what he called his "brother artists;" but his head was of the decidedly eccentric class, so he was not in very great demand, moreover his vehemence and loquacity rendered him a rather restless sitter, a defect which told considerably to his disadvantage.

There is a characteristic anecdote told of the late Duke of Wellington when sitting for his portrait: the artist, a painter of some considerable eminence, did his best to entertain the great man with a little agreeable conversation, in which he could not help observing the Duke took no real interest; this the artist, with a praiseworthy humility, attributed to his own dullness in not hitting upon some subject that would elicit the sitter's attention. On the second day he prepared himself with one or two anecdotes, which he felt sure would prove agreeable: opening the conversation with some general remarks, he soon drifted into anecdote number one, when he was abruptly "pulled up" by the Iron Duke observing, "Sir, I come here for you to paint my portrait, and not to listen to your chatter; be pleased to proceed with your work."

And so it was with Quilter Chaffers, who had often to be reminded that he came to sit as a model, and not to act as a mountebank.

Notwithstanding his many defects, he was very generally represented in some character or other in the Exhibition of the year; so, to use Quilter's own words when referring to the Academy, "Though his own works were not destined to adorn and add to the attractions of the Exhibition, yet he had done in other ways as much, or perhaps more, to fill the hungry coffers of that corrupt body than any other single individual living." For Quilter always maintained that those years when he was most frequently represented by the artists who might introduce him in their pictures were all the best and most profitable years the institution ever knew.

Poor Quilter Chaffers! he hugged his grievances closer than a brother; it was to him meat and drink and consolation under every conceivable circumstance; he was in his own eyes a living evidence that the age of martyrdom had not yet passed away, and that whenever the history of Art in this country should be written, full justice would be done to the great wrongs he had endured, from the crushing influence of the "cold shade" cast upon him; and all because he would not bow to the degrading tyranny which demanded that, before his great historical picture could be submitted to the judgment of an appreciative public, it should be put in a "gaudy gilded frame." But for this grievance, which he hugged so close that it kept him warm, he must have died long years ago from the many privations he had suffered.

He never failed to visit the annual picture exhibition, and went through the rooms with a disdainful sneer at everything upon the walls, except where his own head was painted; then, after a long admiring look, he would shrug his shoulders and pass on: he pronounced the finest pictures "rot" and "mawkish daubs." He maintained that the best of these exhibitions was "a very sorry shilling's worth," where the truest and grandest triumphs of art were sacrificed to the gaudy display of large gilded frames and decorators' mechanism.

"Look you here," he would say, with all the seriousness of wisdom, "the true state of art in this country will never be properly represented until every man can claim as his birthright to have his picture hung upon the walls of the national institution; until, in fact, every man can carry his own picture, with or without a gilded frame, just as he may please, to the door, and demand admittance, select whatever position he deems best for the proper display of his work, and hang it up with his own hands against the walls, no one daring to interfere;" but he would add, with a sigh, "This will not be in my time! not in my time! These stiff-necked R.A.'s would tremble at the idea of giving rising genius a fair, I may say an honest, chance."

He insists with persistent tenacity that the true translation of "*Labor et ingenium*," printed as a motto on the catalogues of the annual exhibition, is "Labour to CRUSH GENIUS."

Poor Quilter Chaffers! he will die in the belief.

G. D.

◆

FOLLY. AN APRIL SONG.

UPON the very foremost day
Of April, Eighteen Forty-seven,
I think, my Polly, I may say
We thought we'd reached the seventh heaven.
How hard I strove to tell my tale!
Till on my breast you hid your blushes,
And o'er us, in the quiet dale,
There fell the happiness that hushes.

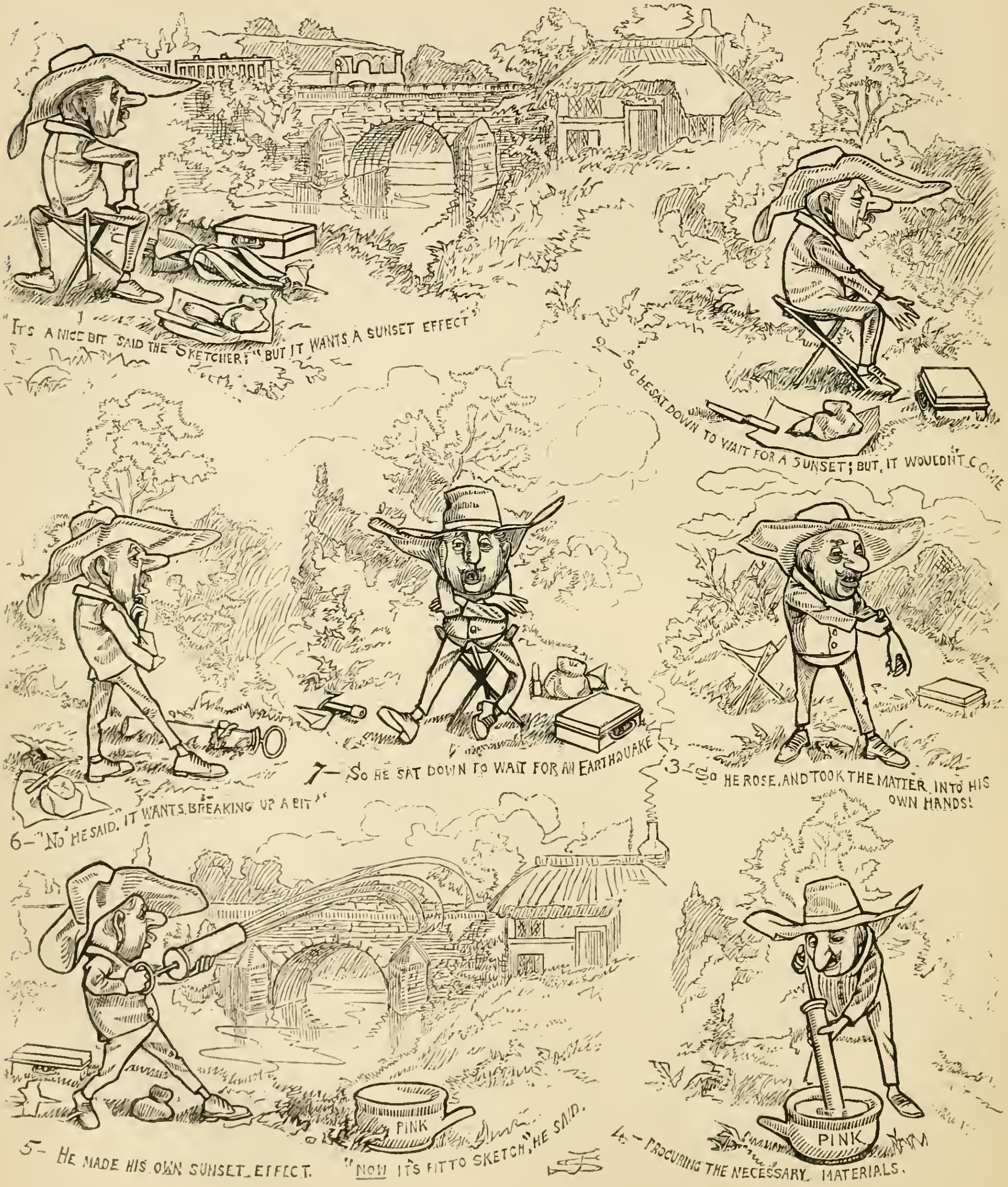
And then I talked—well, like a lad,—
I saw you were content to listen;
I told you all the fears I'd had,
Until your eyes began to glisten.
And then I told, to raise your smiles,
The gauntlet I had run of chaffing—
My jealousy of Harry Giles—
Until you stopped my chatter, laughing.

A year!—we married—poor our state,
Our friends declared it risky—very;
And then, alluding to the date,
They made themselves extremely merry.
But, hand-in-hand, we braved the strife,
With youth and modest hope we met it;
And never once in all my life
Have I had reason to regret it.

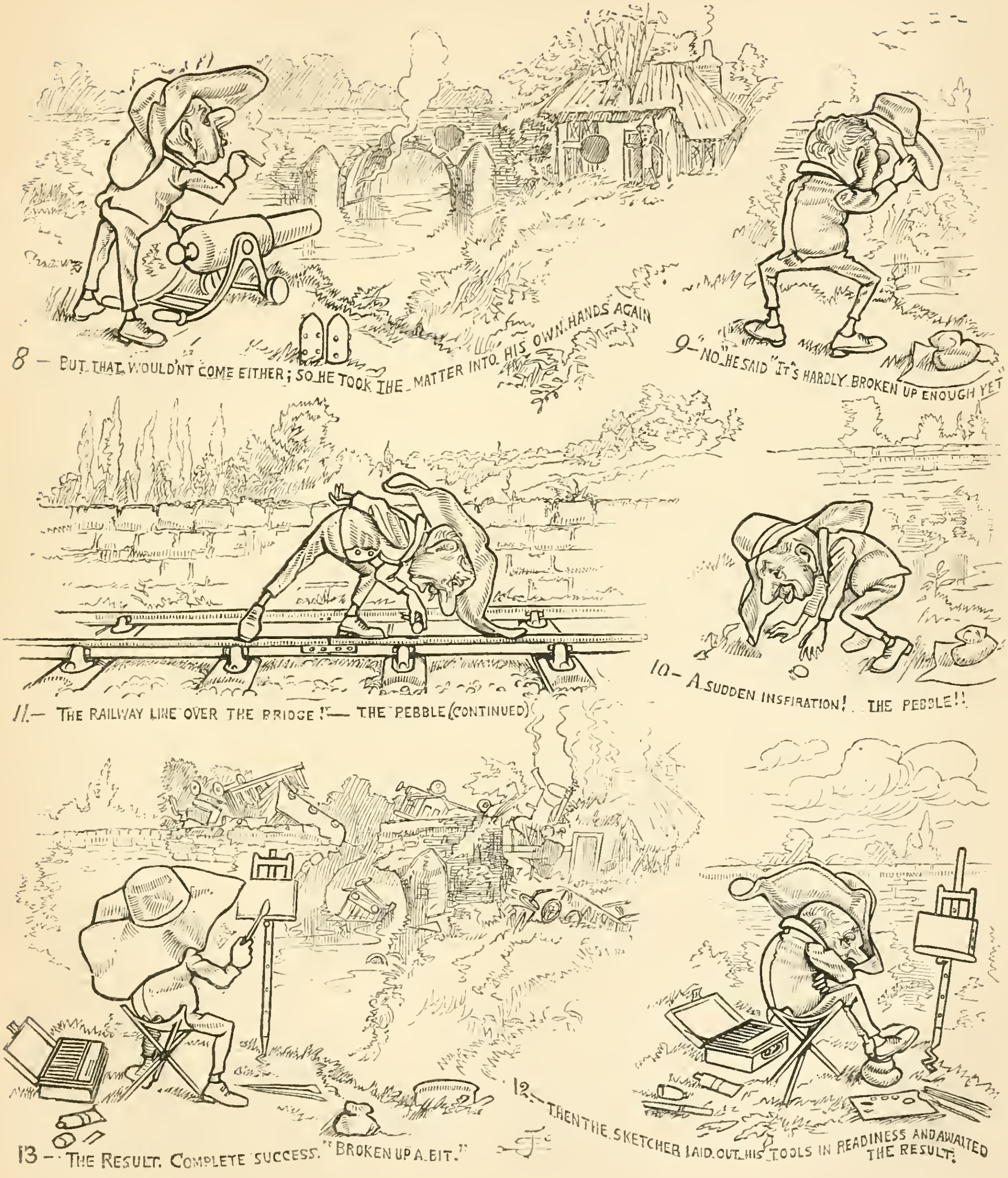
And if I *am* a fool, I've fears
My folly may be never-ending;
I've been a fool for thirty years—
I fancy I'm too old for mending.
And when I sum the joys you bring,
The labours that you lighten, Polly,
I bless you, dear, for answering
"The fool according to his folly!"

JOHN W. HOUGHTON.

THE SKETCHER'S RESOURCES; A HINT TO LANDSCAPE ARTISTS.


"IT'S A NICE BIT" SAID THE SKETCHER; "BUT IT WANTS A SUNSET EFFECT"
2 — SO HE SAT DOWN TO WAIT FOR A SUNSET; BUT IT WOULDN'T COME
3 — SO HE ROSE, AND TOOK THE MATTER INTO HIS OWN HANDS!
4 — PROCURING THE NECESSARY MATERIALS.
PINK
5 — HE MADE HIS OWN SUNSET EFFECT. "NOW IT'S FIT TO SKETCH," HE SAID.
PINK
6 — "NO" HE SAID. IT WANTS BREAKING UP A BIT"
7 — SO HE SAT DOWN TO WAIT FOR AN EARTHQUAKE

THE SKETCHER'S RESOURCES; A HINT TO LANDSCAPE ARTISTS.



8 — BUT THAT WOULD'NT COME EITHER; SO HE TOOK THE MATTER INTO HIS OWN HANDS AGAIN

9 "NO" HE SAID "IT'S HARDLY BROKEN UP ENOUGH YET"

10 — A SUDDEN INSPIRATION! THE PEBBLE!!

11.— THE RAILWAY LINE OVER THE BRIDGE!— THE PEBBLE (CONTINUED)

12.— THEN THE SKETCHER LAID OUT HIS TOOLS IN READINESS AND AWAITED THE RESULT!

13 — THE RESULT. COMPLETE SUCCESS. "BROKEN UP A BIT."

BIRDS OF PASSAGE.

"O swallow, swallow, flying——"
TENNYSON.

IF you knew Simpson you would adore him. He is *so* clever, especially in little matters of cookery, plain and Corinthian, and domestic economy. I say "and domestic economy" advisedly. You and I have occasionally been made acquainted with cookery that had no concern with economy of any description.

Simpson delights in doing the family marketing. *I* loathe marketing. Simpson understands Leadenhall. *I* know a hawk from a hand-saw. Simpson dresses a salad to perfection. *I* invariably spoil oil and make a mash. To me a leg of mutton is mutton,—mere mutton; to Simpson it is—well, say a Southdown, a Cotswold, a Welshman, or a leg "to be shunned like a leper." Simpson has at his fingers' ends the proper seasons for whelks, asparagus, cockles, Jerusalem artichokes, curried fowls, and Anglo-Portugo oysters. I have not. The points of resemblance between Simpson and myself are: we are married; we vote in Finsbury; we abide (severally) in eight-roomed semi-detached mantraps situated, more or less, upon the slopes of Highbury, and we are (dear me, yes!) something in the City.

Wrote Simpson to me two or three Christmases back—I shall never forget it:—

MY DEAR JACK—[the prefatory nomenclature added by my sponsors to the family label of Smith is John Henry]—Step round here, and we will peck a bit together. I have a lay on. Governor's on the scoot. Till death, DOLPH.

Rendered into the English which is written and spoken with propriety at depressing seminaries of learning, the idiomatic note of my friend Adolphus expressed his desire for me to lunch with him at his restaurant, as he had something to communicate which, owing to the temporary absence of the principal of his firm, he was enabled *to* communicate during the said luncheon.

"Where do you dine on Christmas Day?" asked Simpson, as we lingered over the bones of a couple of inadequate chops.

"I *never* dine on *that* day," I replied, with severe dignity, "elsewhere than in the bosom of my family."

"Ah, just so," he rejoined; "you mean you dare dyspepsia at home. So do I. Now, look here: I am getting tired of my poulterer; his imagination is far too vivid. The other day he charged me for a Grewelthorpe cheese which I had never received, and I am resolved to abandon him to his sordid fate. It wants three days to the twenty-fifth. Accompany me to Leadenhall, and we will purchase the bird of your choice, be it turkey or goose. What do you say? Are you game?"

In the sense that I was willing to place myself under Simpson's obliging guidance I *was* game.

We went. On our devious way thither Simpson informed me that he knew a salesman who would put us on the very best terms—with the goose. We would, in fact, be treated just the same as a pair of poulterers. Still, as this obliging salesman was a person of convivial habits, it would be desirable to ask him to join us in a propitiatory glass of a peculiarly fruity wine of Oporto at the private bar of the One-Legged Dodo, which hostelry it was his custom of an afternoon to honour with his support. We visited the Dodo, and sampled the fruity propeller; but as our salesman was not yet come, we sought him in the Mart.

He was tall and handsome. His countenance beamed with benevolence. He probably weighed about seventeen stone six. The greeting between them was hearty, and on Simpson's part impressive. The expression in his eye—Simpson's—said to the salesman, "Look here, old fellow: I was not brought up to your business, but no matter—don't try to deceive *me*. It won't do."

He thereupon proceeded to handle the limbs, and stretch the necks, and poke his knuckles into the bosoms of the defunct birds by which he was surrounded, with quite a Leadenhall air.

"Capital stuff that, Mr. Simpson."

"Well, yes, pretty fair," replied S., at the same time favouring me with a wink of the deepest diplomacy. Catch him committing himself! "My young friend here," indicating me, "is rather green about this kind of thing; but"—hereupon he discharged into the depths of the oracular salesman's left ear a whispered observation which terminated in "eh?"

"Oh!" replied he of Leadenhall, "I ought not, you know, I am so busy; but on the strict condition that it is one—only one, mind,—I will."

Again we lend our support to the Bar of the One-Legged Dodo, and renew our acquaintance with the there's-no-mistake-about-it-mind-you port. Green as the greenest gosling I might be, Mr. Simpson, but mean, Mr. Simpson, I was not. I had paid for the former goblets of the fervid wine of Oporto. I would also pay for these.—But what *was* the paltry sum of two shillings and sixpence in view of the benefits which I was about to derive from Simpson's introduction? Nothing,—ab-so-lute-ly nothing.

The shades of evening, not unmingled with fog, had enveloped the upper portion of the imperfect Dodo by the time Simpson's salesman, and Simpson, and myself, returned to the Mart. We had in the meantime added to our knowledge of that not-to-be-denied vintage of Oporto.—But, I ask, what was the paltry sum of four shillings in view of the advantages which were about to accrue to me from the meeting? What, indeed!

Simpson was splendid. I was nowhere. He held me with his glittering eye, and under its irresistible spell I bought just what he pleased. If he had offered on the spot to purchase the stock, goodwill, book-debts and fixtures, in my behalf, I should have consented. Hear him.

"Not a bit of it. That flamingo! Why, I'd be ashamed to see it on my table. The breast, what there is of it, is torn to pieces.—Now, I tell you what I'll do. It is for my friend here, but my friend in these matters is myself. Ten bob for the goose, fifteen for the turkey, and seven for the duck, that's one and twelve. Now say one and ten, and it's a bargain."

"Mr. Simpson," remonstrated the merchant, "you know there is nobody living I'd oblige sooner than you, but I could not do it. I can show you my books."

"Book me no books; is it yes or no?"

"But, Dolph," said I meekly, "my wife abominates duck, and I don't care for turkey; and our family is——"

"Bother your family, and you too! This is gratitude! If you say another word I'll leave you to your own parsimonious devices. Let *me* alone. Now, sir," to the salesman, "is it a bargain?"

It was. I paid sixpence for a rush basket, and hired a youth to carry it,—sixpence more. Five shillings.—But recollecting what advantages I had derived from Dolph's introduction, what *was* the paltry sum of five shillings? A mere bagatelle!

We revisited the Dodo, and partook of a stirrup-cup, which everybody insisted on paying for. The settlement was finally effected with the aid of Tommy Dod and—myself.—But bearing in mind the inestimable benefits which I had obtained from knowing Simpson's salesman, what was the contemptible sum of six shillings and sixpence? Not worth thinking of!

It was not much of a fog, but at ordinary times the streets which lie between Cornhill and the Broad Street Station of the North London are difficult to navigate. Then, the youth who bore the basket was imbued with notions of short cuts which did not accord with my ideas on the subject; and he would insist on arguing the point. During one of our discussions I lost Simpson, and from that moment I became a blighted being.

Taking Simpson's word for it—(we went into the matter thoroughly on Christmas Day)—and I do not see why I should not, seeing that the fog had not impaired his memory (as it certainly did mine)—I must have travelled to and from Broad Street and Chalk Farm for upwards of four hours before I awoke.

To seize the basket, show my ticket, and jump into a Hansom, was the work of moments merely;

but there was a dispute about the fare. Those cabmen are all alike! He swore—yes, he swore—he had driven me from Dalston. I knew better. However, I detest unseemly altercations on a doorstep; and so, handing him the sum of two shillings and my card, I said,

"You have your remedy. You had better take yourself off as quickly as you can."

He obeyed with remarkable alacrity, and I prepared to receive the greetings of the wife of my bosom.

I had known her manner more affectionate than it was on that occasion. But I forgave her. We never know what troubles women have to bear at home during our unavoidable absences in the City.

"Where *have* you been, John, until this hour? And what have you been doing with yourself? Why, you are all over feathers and down!"

"Doing?" replied I, with a heavenly smile, "ask Simpson;—and, as for the feathers——"

It was in vain to try to articulate further. The horrible truth flashed upon me. With a frantic yell I tore open the outer door of my once happy home, and rushed bareheaded into the road. There was not a vehicle visible, but from the far distance there stole—yes, stole—upon my ear the sound of rapidly-disappearing wheels. The cab was gone, and with it my turkey, duck, and goose.

* * * * *

I shall never forget the horrors of that night. Searching for a numberless cabman who has robbed you of your Christmas dinner is a costly proceeding, especially when you do not find him, which was my case.

* * * * *

It was not without some difficulty that my wife could be persuaded to accept Simpson's invitation. At length her scruples were overcome. In all my experiences of geese I never attempted the mastication of one so tough. As I caught my wife's look, "more in sorrow than in anger," I thought of that cabman, and wondered whether his or my birds had been suffered to reach the age of Simpson's goose ere their hour of execution. I fondly hoped they had.

BYRON WEBBER.

FROM PARIS.

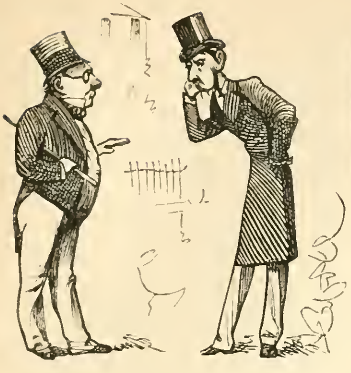
THE peaceful moon of autumn beams
  Soft silence o'er the silvered Seine,
The lamp-starred Champs Elysées seems
  Elysian—strange to care and pain;
Beneath its aisles of lights and leaves
  How gaily flit the shadowed throng!
Yet here how picturing fancy weaves
  One English scene for which I long!
French twittered whispers—what are they?
  My heart hears voices sweeter far,
And memory, love-led, wings her way
  To where my distant dear ones are.

What though before my eyes gleam bright
  The thousand lamps each lounger sees—
La Concorde's Place's heaven of light,
  The Tuileries' dark stirless trees,
Though Pleasure, masked as laughing Love,
  Beneath this dreaming midnight sky
Wins down to earth the joy above,
  And thrills the night with glance and sigh,
Yet still though these soft sights I see,
  Though round me these new scenes I view,
What are they all, O wife, to me?
  My thoughts will fly to home and you.

Yes, over leagues of Norman green,
  O'er ocean's night-empurpled blue,
My heart speeds far from this bright scene,
  And thrills itself, O love, with you.
Die down, O night of Paris, die!
  Through joy to joy, to radiant day,
Through all the hours that softly fly,
  My thoughts will wander one fond way.
O coming hours, speed on your track,
  And bring the gifts your hands shall give,
And bring the day that speeds me back
  To her for whose dear love I live.

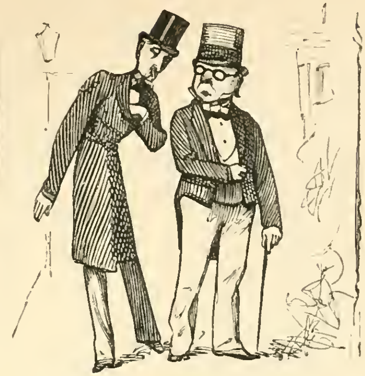
W. C. BENNETT.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF SOME DEAF 'UNS.

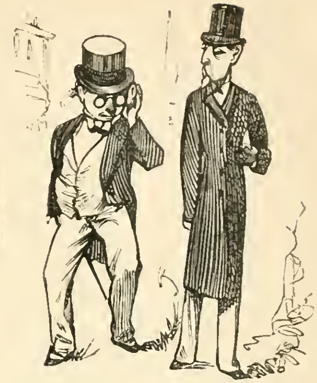


Brown was deaf with the right ear, so was Jones.

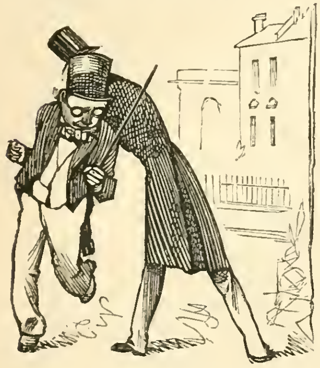
"I was saying," said Brown—



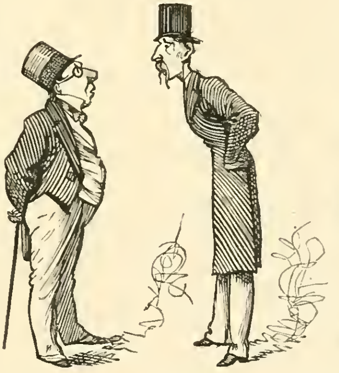
"Beg pardon," said Jones, "but you had my deaf side."



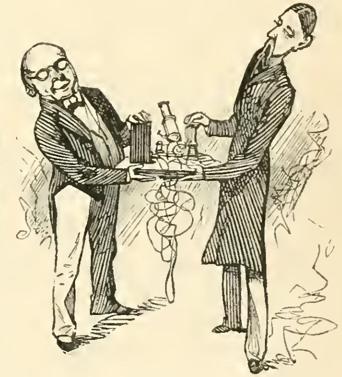
"Beg pardon," said Brown, "but you had *my* deaf side."



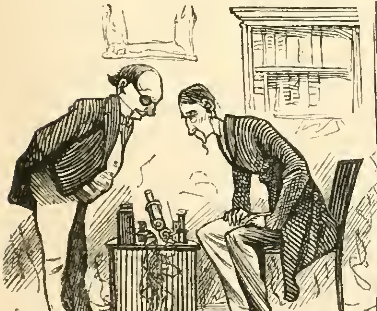
So they were always running round each other.



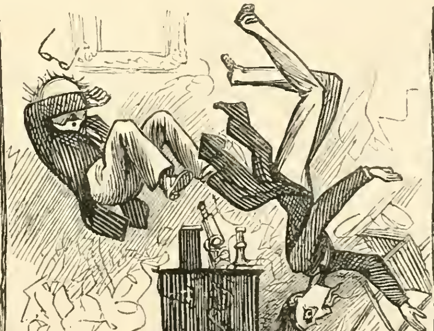
"You're a nuisance!" said Brown.—"You're a fool!" said Jones; but as neither of them heard, it didn't much matter.



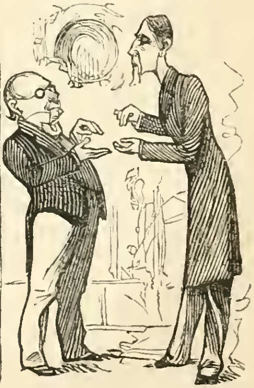
Happy thought—the microphone; so they bought one of tremendous power.



They examine intently.



Fearful catastrophe! Jones had winked when too near the machine; the noise was terrific.



So they were both deaf with both ears ever after.

KING JA-JO-JA AND THE POSTAGE STAMPS.

A Traveller's Yarn.

FROM my earliest days, ay, and nights too! I have had the instincts of a traveller. I can scarcely remember a time, indeed, when I did not show a marked taste for exploration and adventure. I have since been told that I used to weep bitterly even in my perambulator, and refuse to be comforted, when my nursemaid failed to take turnings that led to roads new to my infantine gaze. As soon as I gained the free use of my nether limbs, I signalized the fact by toddling off for my little life through a gap in our garden palings; and was discovered, after a long search, placidly sleeping beneath a rhubarb-leaf in a garden some quarter of a mile distant, with my dimpled face smeared with the juice of the bilberries on which I had supped, thus evincing that faculty for roughing it in the open which stands in such good stead to the traveller.

As I grew up, running away from school for the day was my besetting sin, and it was soon found out that no more hardly-felt punishment could be inflicted on me than depriving me of my boots.

It was not until I was eleven, however, that my first ambitious journey was undertaken. At that age I had ardently read all Captain Mayne Reid's works then published, and their perusal led to my joining to my instinctive desire to explore new districts a strong wish to be a trapper, with intensely hostile relations with Indians, *à la* Old Rube. Thus, when I set out to discover the source of the muddy stream that flowed through my birthplace, I determined to make myself independent of the facilities offered me by the civilized character of the country I should pass through; and for this purpose included in my scanty kit a large lens, surreptitiously taken from my father's telescope; a clothes-line, purloined from the washhouse; a piece of pork that happened to be in pickle at the time; and a bow and arrows. On the lens I intended to fall back as a means of cooking my ration of pork, in case I failed, as I had good reason to suppose I should, in making a fire by rubbing two sticks together; for lucifer-matches I despised as a mean invention which served to rob the campaign of its delightful difficulties. The clothes-line it was my intention to use as a lasso for any big game that might cross my path; whilst I am bound to admit that the notion in my mind when I took the bow and arrows was to shoot rabbits and stray cats with them, with the view of bartering their skins for firearms and ammunition.

Looking on that expedition as my initiatory one, it was anything but propitious; and long ago as it is since I started on it, I can vividly remember the very unromantic aspect which heavy rain throughout the first night put upon my journey; and how very unlike the rough but cheery meals of Mayne Reid's trappers was my attempt to gnaw a piece of sodden pickled pork, jobbed off with a blunt pocketknife. Disheartened and damp as I was, I thought it my duty to discharge all my arrows at a rook's nest, which I failed to hit; and then in desperation, climbed a gate and flung my clothes-line at a calf, the infuriated mother of which at once came out from behind a haystack and charged at me most furiously. Humiliating as it was, and untrapperlike as I felt it to be, I had to run for my life; and, clearing a ditch in fine style, I positively ran into the arms of my uncle Ebenezer, who had been advised of my loss by that morning's post, and who took me back home that very afternoon in a quaint covered conveyance, much affected by the yeomen of the neighbourhood, called a Coburg, and something like an exaggerated old poke bonnet swung on two wheels. I was caned by my father, and wept over by my mother, as she administered to me nauseous concoctions of herbs to keep away ague;

and, worst of all, had my pocket-money stopped to pay for the purloined pork.

But I do not propose to give details of my youthful escapades further than to state that, after running away from three boarding-schools and being brought back, I finally got right off and went to sea, where, true to my instincts, I was wrecked on a previously-undiscovered island, of which I drew a map, on the only pocket-handkerchief I had left, with the bone of a penguin dipped in cuttle-fish ink. This map I presented to the Royal Geographical Society on my return; and I should have had a medal had not a Fellow spitefully suggested that I no more deserved merit for discovering the island than a drowning man did for slipping a life-belt over his shoulders when it was thrown to him.

Soon after this, whilst I was looking for rubies in the Rocky Mountains, both my parents died, leaving me a small competency, that enabled me, however, to fulfil the wish of my heart, which was African exploration. Never yet had I been able with my scanty funds to purchase the half a ton or so of glass beads without which no African traveller dares set out. But at last, by realizing a portion of my property, I could get the desiderated "gewgaws," and a gross of pocket-mirrors and two hundred and fifty yards of peony-patterned chintz to boot; and I commenced a series of incursions into the Dark Continent which have continued ever since.

But how is it, it will be asked, that, after such long devotion to African travel (for it is twenty years ago since I began), I remain unknown to fame?—for it would be ridiculous for me to claim the acquaintance of the public even with the name of Theodore John Pulliver. The answer is simple. Lord High Admiral Nelson, I believe I am right in saying, was always a quarter of an hour too early throughout his life, and to this habit owed the fact that, when he cried in the words of the showman, "Kiss me, 'Ardy; I'm a-wownded!" he had reached the summit of professional glory.

I, Theodore John Pulliver, on the contrary, unlike the Lord High Admiral I have named, have been always a quarter of an hour too late, and with the most disastrous consequences. Had I, for instance, caught the Nile boat that left Alexandria on a Wednesday morning, some score of years ago, at 11.15 for the Upper Cataracts, it would have been the name of Pulliver, and not those of Speke and Grant, that would have been handed down to posterity as the discoverer of the sources of the Nile. But I missed it, thanks to a stubborn donkey that insisted on travelling tail first, by some twelve minutes; and had the chagrin, many months after, when I came upon the source of the mighty Egyptian river, to find from a visiting card Captain Speke had courteously nailed to a palm-tree, that he and his companion had forestalled me by a few hours at most, as the strong smell of fresh tobacco smoke hanging about the spot convinced me.

Then, again, on the very day that Stanley uttered those historical words, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" I was rapidly approaching Ujiji on express camels, bound on a similar mission of discovery on behalf of the *Elgin and Banff Courier*. Never shall I forget my intense excitement, as, catching sight of the man whose photograph I had fixed in the crown of my hat, and flinging myself excitedly from my camel, I exclaimed, "That nose! those eyes! it must be! it is the long-lost Dr. Livingstone!" *

Nor, again, shall I ever forget my disappointment as the Doctor, gently smiling, calmly replied, "You're a day too late, young man; I was discovered just about this time yesterday by one Stanley."

So, too, last year, I was really in front of Henry William on the Congo till the Cataracts were reached, but there I unfortunately broke my leg, and my followers mutinied and left me literally up a bread-fruit-tree, in the branches of which I had made them place me for safety. Stanley and his party must have gone by one night whilst I slept; for when I at last was strong enough to get down again,—and this was only just in time, for I had eaten the tree quite bare, and must have starved in another week,—I found traces of them on the bank, and feared at once that my luck had been bad as usual.

---

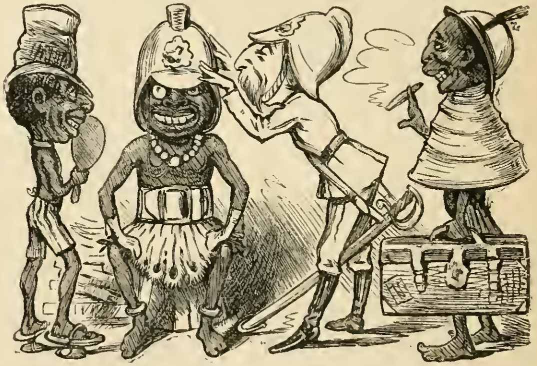
* In my natural excitement at this moment, I believe what I really said was, "Those nose, that eyes, it must is! it be the lost-long Doctor Livingstone!" But, had the speech become historical, it would have been in its corrected form.—T. J. P.

I struggled on, however, single-handed, but only to experience, when I at last reached the coast, a very one-horse kind of welcome, and to find all the Bass in the settlement drunk up by my successful rival.

Most men would have given up geographical discovery after such disappointments, and, retiring to some quiet rural district, would have revenged themselves on their fellow-men by agitating for a school board, or instituting penny readings; but with me it was discovery or death; and my journeys were as frequent as my limited means would allow, it being necessary sometimes to allow my spare income to accumulate before I could purchase the requisite quantity of glass beads, for which I found a more extortionate demand the farther I penetrated into the *terra incognita* of the Dark Continent.

In the opening of the year 1874 I started under unusually favourable auspices, for I had more glass beads than I had ever taken before, to say nothing of a dozen second-hand firemen's helmets, which, though bulky to carry, would, I knew, win me a welcome where even cocked hats and Union Jack pocket-handkerchiefs had failed to open me a path.

Nor was I mistaken. Three negro Emperors, each more powerful than the Mtesa—or Empty Esau as I call him for fun, about whom Stanley made such a fuss—begged on their bended knees for one of those firemen's helmets; and each and all decreed that it should constitute, in conjunction with a necklace of half-inch beads and an eye-glass, the Imperial state dress of their dynasties. Another potentate offered me a thousand elephants just for the loan of one whilst he went to fight a neighbour; and as the news spread of the novel article I had in my possession, all the Kings of the country sent pressing messages to me to come and see them. As I had, of course, to reserve the best helmet for myself, and as moreover I used another secretly for culinary purposes, I could not be at all lavish with them; but one invitation I at once made up my mind to accept, and that was the one sent me by Ja-jo-ja, the King of Mimemi, a monarch to whom report accorded characteristics and capabilities unique in a Central African potentate. Rumour also mentioned, as the cause of his peculiar enlightenment, the fact that, some years before, a balloon had fallen in his country, in the car of which was found no living occupant, it is true, but a number of books that had evidently been put in for ballast, including some odd volumes of Cassell's "Popular Educator," a Mavor's "Spelling Book," the "Habits of Good Society," and an "Etiquette for Gentlemen." I made immediate efforts to visit this interesting monarch, in whom I hoped to find a fitting instrument for carrying out a plan of which I will give details later on; and, being met at the confines of his kingdom of Mimemi by an official in white gloves and bathing drawers, who received me with a series of bows, evidently formulated on the directions given in a "Handbook of Etiquette," the rumour I had heard concerning Ja-jo-ja and the balloon was at once partially confirmed. Nor did any doubt remain after entering the kingly presence, for the potentate himself, in addition to a bead necklace, was attired in a cool-looking *surtout* made of balloon netting, whilst a pile of well-worn volumes was conspicuously placed to the right of the throne.



I lost no time in putting my least battered and best burnished helmet on Ja-jo-ja's head, a compliment he reciprocated by creating me his Prime Minister on the spot, and placing all my followers on his Civil List, with pensions of a quart of cowries a day, equal to one and elevenpence, say, of our money.

The general appearance of things about the Court, however, suggested that cowries were anything but plentiful, and I heard an old black woman, who looked suspiciously like the Court Washerwoman, having an angry altercation outside the palace with Yum-yum, the official who had come to meet us; whilst I could not but notice that a big oil-jar to the left of the throne, which was labelled with the Mimemese equivalent for "National Treasury," was so far from full that the negro Chancellor of the Exchequer nearly fell headlong into it, in his efforts to get at enough cowries to pay for a barrelful of potted elephant, which the bearer—ominous sign!—sturdily refused to leave without the money.

I was the more encouraged, therefore, as soon as I was alone with the King, to allude openly to the state of his finance, which he promptly confessed was most unsatisfactory. In fact, he went on to tell me that so great had been his expenses—thanks principally to the extravagant example of an uncle of his, who, after passing ten years of his life in England as a lion-tamer, had returned to Mimemi to die amongst his people—that the regular taxes had been collected for the next four years in advance, all the current revenue being of an uncertain and fitful character. The ex-lion-tamer, from whom Ja-jo-ja had learned his English, was no more, and since his demise matters had been growing worse and worse, until the King—and this will show you to what depths of impecuniosity he had sunk—actually suggested to me that an exhibition should be made of his new helmet and the large necklace of blue and yellow beads he wore on state occasions, to which his subjects should be admitted on payment of twopence a head.* I assured him that no such step would be necessary if my advice was followed, and I at once proceeded to unfold the plan already hinted at.

"May it please your Majesty," I began, "in this otherwise perfect kingdom I surely miss something. You have no post."

"Post!" re-echoed the King. "Oh, yes, we have. A man was whipped at it yesterday, and *he* didn't surely miss it, I can tell you."

As in duty bound, I went off into convulsions at his Majesty's quip, and, presuming on my high office, I even ventured to slightly prod the regal ribs, as I exclaimed "Tchuk! you mad wag, you!" But, resuming my gravity, I went on to assure my new Sovereign that it was not a whipping-post I meant. "Oh, dear, no! your Majesty," said I. "What your country is languishing for is a penny post, which, as your lion-taming relative may have informed you, is the glory of Old England."

"No," returned the King, after reflection: "my uncle Bobo, I believe, told me the glory of your land was rum; but if the penny post is a good drink, let us have some of him by all means."

It required considerable explanation on my part to make clear my design to Ja-jo-ja; but directly he understood its introduction meant a steady income of cowries, he jumped at it, and fell on my neck and embraced me till I was all over native butter.

I must now take the reader back a little, as they do in the three-volume novels, and let him into a secret. Three months before I had started on the journey I am speaking of, my aunt Hephzibah passed away. She was an innocent old spinster, who had spent her life in making patchwork quilts and collecting old postage stamps; and, much to my surprise, I found that of her hoard of the latter, filling three big tea-chests, I was left sole legatee.

As the Government refused to take legacy duty on these old stamps, and as a collection of a million of them does *not* confer on the possessor the right of nomination to an Orphanage, as used to be rumoured; and as, moreover, I had not the ambition to have a room papered with them (nor a room either, if it came to that), my first notion was to burn my legacy, tea-chests and all. On second thoughts, however, not only did I decide to keep the old stamps, but I also had them packed carefully in a waterproof box, and took them with me on my African journey with my helmets and my beads.

When, therefore, Ja-jo-ja asked what he was to do for stamps for the new postal service, I was able to assure him that he might rely on me for all such details, if he would only supply, on his part, the requisite arbitrary decrees and despotic regulations to bring the postal system into general use.

---

* Possibly King Ja-jo-ja's uncle had told him that in England the Crown jewels were on view to all who could pay sixpence for the sight, and the savage potentate thought, maybe, he was merely proposing something of the same kind.—Ed. H. C. A.

I left the regal residence that day Postmaster-General as well as Prime Minister of Mimemi, and with a duly signed document in my pocket, securing me half the gross profits of my undertaking.

It was with a light heart and pleasant thoughts of my aunt Hephzibah I opened the case and found the old stamps in capital condition, with the exception of the top layer, for which, in consideration of their bleached appearance, I promptly resolved to charge fourpence and use for registered letters.

When all was ready, and a large hut near the palace set apart for the sale of stamps, the King, at my instigation, issued an edict, of which the following is a free translation :—

"TO MY FOND AND FAITHFUL PEOPLE OF
"MIMEMI.

"Our thoughts are ever for your welfare. Night and day have we pondered how to make you happy.

"At last, We, your King, the lord of many elephants and no few rattlesnakes, have taken counsel on your behalf with the stranger from beyond the seas. The white-faced traveller has opened his heart to us; and, lo! it is very fair and good towards you.

"Rejoice, therefore, and buy many postage stamps of the great Yum-yum at the gates of our palace.

"KING JA-JO-JA."

On the face of it, this proclamation may seem somewhat vague and inconsequent; but it should be remembered that for days my followers, acting on my instructions, had been spreading the praise of the postal system throughout the country. I had translated, for one thing, a handbill relating to some famous quack pills into Mimemese, only for the word "pills" I substituted "postage stamps;" and having made my people learn this by heart, I bade them recite it wherever they went to all they met.

The popular idea of the new organization, therefore, was that it was a kind of state medicine; and not a few of the earlier purchasers of the stamps, which had been carefully re-gummed, stuck them all over their persons like Liliputian plasters.

In spite of the rush of the sick and ailing to avail themselves of the new postal facilities, the general result of the first day's business was by no means up to our expectations, and the public disappointment, on finding that the postage stamp was not an immediate cure for warts, pimples, or tumours, threatened at one time to take the shape of a violent attack on the post-office. This danger, though we warded off; but, to imbue the populace with a desire to write letters either of friendship, or of business, or to stimulate it to take a proper view of the boon thus placed within its reach, seemed such hopeless work, that, finding, after the office had been open three days, the takings only amounted to the equivalent, in cowries, of £1 4*s.* 2*d.*, including the 8*s.* 4*d.* for the stamps bought by an old chief with intercostal rheumatism to apply to his side like a mustard plaster, I went to Ja-jo-ja to assure him he must adopt more stringent measures.

"People that can write and won't write," said I, "must be made to write, your Majesty."

"Just so," returned the genial potentate; "and perhaps you would like to teach them to do so."

"What!" I exclaimed, "you mean to say, King Ja-jo-ja, that your people cannot write?"

"Write?" said the monarch, smiling, "not a single one of them!"

"Then, why, for goodness' sake, didn't you tell me so?" I cried, angrily. "Here have I been arranging for big daily deliveries of letters, and now you tell me no one in your country can write."

"*Wrong* is more in my people's way," returned Ja-jo-ja, again smiling. "But look here," he went on more seriously: "what must we do really?"—and his face fell perceptibly as he gazed down into the still hopelessly empty oil-jar.

I had soon hit upon a new plan to meet the prevailing lack of caligraphic skill, and this was embodied in a fresh edict issued by the monarch. By this arbitrary document it was arranged that every adult inhabitant of Mimemi should send at least two letters per week to some one or another; but that, to overcome the writing difficulty, the envelope should be directed (for a small additional charge) by the postal officials, whilst the contents might consist of a leaf, a small flower, a butterfly, or even nothing at all, so anxious was Ja-jo-ja to meet his people's wishes. As he had 20,000 adult subjects at the very least, the weekly returns ought under these circumstances to be close on £170, and I still saw my way to clearing a handsome sum by my aunt Hephzibah's legacy.

But, alas! once more were we doomed to disappointment. In spite of the peremptory proclamation, few customers came; and those that did severely taxed our resources by wishing to enclose such unanticipated articles as store pigs, pickled elephants' feet, and puncheons of palm oil.

Ja-jo-ja, enraged at finding his first day's share in the receipts was but 9*s.* 2*d.*, sent out his palace guards to seize the first twenty adult subjects they came to. Brought into the royal presence, he furiously demanded of them why they had disobeyed the last edict. Their reply suggested collusion, for, lifting up their voices with one accord, they cried,

"O King! thine unworthy worms have no one to whom they can send a letter."

"What!" exclaimed the King, "no relative?"

"No, your Majesty," returned the adults; "no relative."

"What!" exclaimed the King, "no friend?"

"No, your Majesty," returned they; "no friend."

"What!" exclaimed the King, "no anybody?"

"No, your Majesty," returned the adults, "no anybody, and we only wish we had!"

And with the same they turned on their heels, as though that must necessarily be the end of the discussion.

But King Ja-jo-ja was not to be foiled like this. For a moment he was silent; but a glance into the empty oil-jar seemed to reassure him, and, looking up, he hastily winked at me, and then, calling after the adults, he exclaimed,

"Here, stay a minute! You have no one to send a letter to, and you only wish you had, eh?"

"Ah, your Majesty, that we do!" cried they, still with one accord.

"Then, look here!" returned their monarch—and I never felt prouder of that potentate than at that moment—"you shall all send letters to *me*, to tell me how you love and honour me, twice a week. The first letter's due to-morrow! Do you hear?"

"Yes, your Majesty," replied the adults, but no longer in glib unison, for they knew Ja-jo-ja meant what he said; whilst I, well satisfied at the King's happy thought, stepped out to sell stamps to the discomfited twenty as they passed.

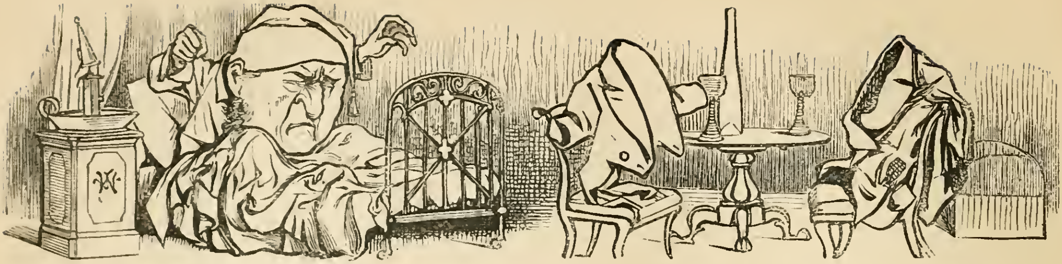
A third edict put the monarch's notion most unmistakably before the people; and as it further stated that the King would expect to hear daily from those who failed in their bi-weekly epistle, the rush for stamps the next morning was almost overwhelming, and Yum-yum was kept licking them till he dropped, what with fatigue and bad gum.

That afternoon I proudly escorted a file of slaves bearing nearly 9,000 letters in baskets to their King, and, what was better, filled two big oil-jars and a bucket with the cowries representing Ja-jo-ja's share of the receipts.

To shorten my story, I may say that in about six months not a single stamp of my aunt Hephzibah's legacy was in hand; but I had instead elephants' tusks and teeth in my possession, which, on my subsequent return to this country, brought me in close upon £2,500, upon which sum, however, I have not yet remitted any legacy duty under the head of "conscience money."

King Ja-jo-ja pressed me to continue in his service, but the fact was my faithful followers warned me that, as the originator of the postal service in Mimemi, I was cordially hated by the populace; so I promised him to return shortly with a fresh stock of stamps, and, pressing on him my last glass beads, went off in the night, with just enough of my followers to carry my ivory. The others I left chargeable to the Mimemi Civil List, and, so far as I know, they are drawing their quarts of cowries to this day. As for me, I am still what I always was, a traveller, with no civil list to draw upon. So, in default, I draw, as you see, upon my imagination.

AGLEN A. DOWTY.



DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW.

MY swallow-tail coat being shapely and neat,
And glossy and black in its brightness,
It 's been my unwavering practice to treat
That garment with studied politeness.
I carefully brush it within and without,
I tend it with interest hearty,
And when I appear at a dinner or rout,
I arrange it shall be of the party.
And though in a general way I may note,
To walk is my regular habit,
Wherever I 'm taking my swallow-tail coat,
I study its feelings, and "cab it."

And now, as a contrast, remark how I use
A coat I possess in the City.
Just glance at the object—you 'll hardly refuse
To grant it unqualified pity;
It 's burst at the elbows, it shines at the seams,
It 's tattered and greasy and rusty,
And work among dirty old papers in reams
Has made it repulsively dusty.
And, treated by me in a cavalier way,
Its aspect grows daily forlorner—
It acts as a pen-wiper most of the day,
And passes the night in a corner.

But something occurred in connection with each
To give them an interest vaster:
I dreamt they were suddenly gifted with speech,
And busy discussing their master.
The things what that swallow-tail strove to maintain,
Not soon from my mind will be blotted:
I spoke "like a creature deficient in brain—
A *roué*—abandoned—besotted."
I "shocked him extremely by winding *his* arm
At balls round the waist of some gipsy.
At dinners I gave him the wildest alarm
By getting disgustingly tipsy."

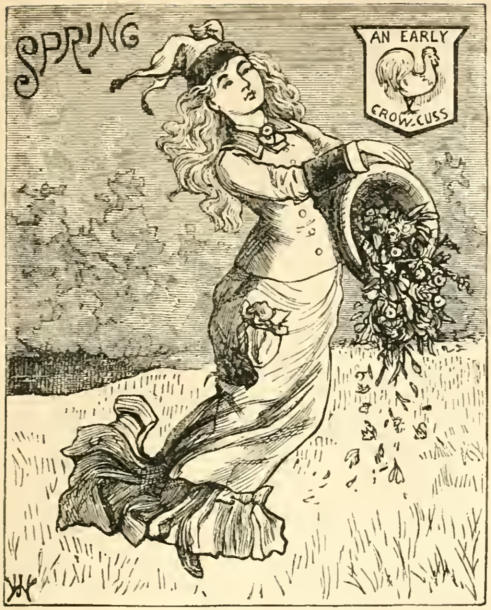
"Dear me, you surprise me uncommonly," cried
The coat I 'd despised and neglected;
"Your mind to describing our master applied,
Now, this is what I'd have expected:
'A business-like person of manners sedate,
In business-like pleasures delighting,
And passing his time, whether early or late,
In adding up figures, and writing;
Devoted alike to his office and wife,
While cheerily doing his duty,
And (not ostentatiously) leading a life
Of singular goodness and beauty.'"

* * * * * *

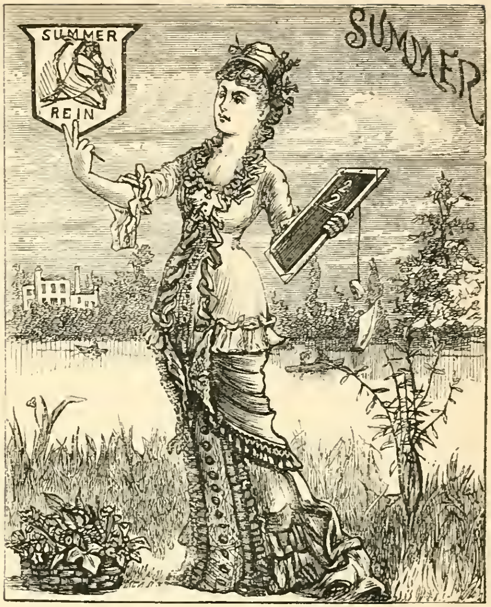
And which is the truth, when my story is done?
Well, neither the one nor the other.
We 're never so black as we 're painted by one,
So white as we 're limned by another.
I leave you to *guess* what the story may mean,—
The style of narration is hollow;
But out of the chaos I 've managed to glean
A couple of morals, as follow:—
Devotion will not always gratitude bring,
Nor slights the reverse, if we knew it;
And any opinion we hold of a thing
Depends on the point whence we view it.

JOHN W. HOUGHTON.

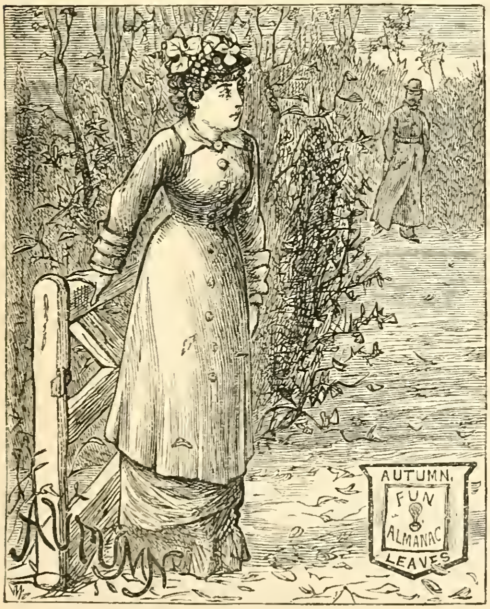
SEASONS.


SPRING
AN EARLY
CROW-CUSS

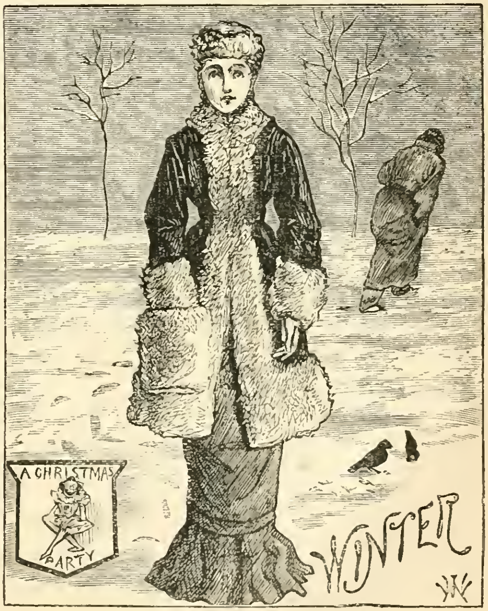
The youthful year arrives to bring
And scatter posies in *the Spring.*


SUMMER
REIN
SUMMER

Time passes on, and here we find
A Summer of a doubtful kind.


AUTUMN
FUN
ALMANAC
LEAVES
AUTUMN

While Autumn brings this scene to view
(And Echo whispers, "Ought 'em?" too)


A CHRISTMAS
PARTY
WINTER

Till here the end (we represent
"The Winter of their discontent").

THE GALLERY OF ECHOES.

I.

"SO there is another stranger come amongst us?" said one of the townswomen.

"Yes; quite suddenly; as like a shooting star as any of them," said another.

"Staying at the Sojourners' House, I hear," says Madam Townswoman the First.

"And very quiet," says Madam Townswoman the Second.

"Oh, we shall find her out before long."

"Ay, ay, shall we not, neighbour?"

"Mother," says a little round-faced boy, "I dreamt a white pigeon flew into the market-place last night, and when I tried to catch it, I woke up."

"Pigeon here, pigeon there!" cries mother; "what then?"

"And then, mother, I went to sleep again, and dreamt I was in the church, and the pigeon flew in, and when the organ began to play, it turned to an angel."

"You should have offered it some grey peas," says Madam Townswoman the First.

"And then the angel would have turned back into a pigeon," says Madam Townswoman the Second; and away they went laughing.

In the course of the day they called, like other townspeople, at the Sojourners' House, to leave messages of civility for the young stranger. It was a very polite city: all you had to do was not to offend anybody, and then you might be perfectly happy there from morning to night.

It is very easy never to offend anybody, or, at any rate, it is very easy to say, if it does happen that the fault is not yours.

II.

"HERE she comes! here she comes!" went in a whisper round the market-place; for it was the busy time of day in that town, and the women had plenty to say of the sweet-faced new-comer.

"Ah, ah! that dream of the little one was not so bad. She looks as much like a dove as a woman can."

"I do not believe in your dovelike girls. Warrant you she makes a sharp bargain with our neighbour the fruiterer there!"

"She is not dressed in our fashion, that 's the truth; but she will learn in time. We shall break her in. What a skirt! Very bad taste."

"Your pardon, ladies," interrupted a handsome, rakish-looking young artist, "but I think the taste is good. A little old-fashioned, perhaps; but what could you change for the better? The dress seems a part of the wearer."

"You artists are so very original," says Madam Townswoman the First: "we could not think of expecting you to admire such poor watchet weeds as ours."

And with that the two ladies curtseyed and laughed.

"What!" said he, "jealous of that quiet little pigeon,—*you*, in all your splendour?"

At this moment the damsel began to cross the square in such a direction that the good wives could, without any particular affectation, manage to meet her, and they turned round to do it.

"Good morrow, Mr. Hawk," said one of them, smiling.

"Oh, you naughty man!" said the other, shaking her head at him. "Go, go!"

Then Mr. Artist went to see his friend Mr. Fruiterer, and bought a fine nosegay to send to the beautiful new-comer at the Sojourners' House.

III.

IN all the history of that town, which is a very long history, there never had been a lady stranger so beset as this, or one so difficult to entrap into the fashion of the place. Oh! she was friendly and sweet. But there it stayed; and by the custom of the place she was still not allowed or invited to leave the Sojourners' House. Whether she was anxious to stay or to go none could tell, only they were all bent on keeping her among them if they could. It very soon came to be whispered around the city that she was one of the Golden Strangers—a rare visitant. There were Golden Strangers and Silver Strangers, as well as ordinary ones. This did not mean that some were very much richer than others, but only that some brought more of what the townspeople called luck to the town than others. But the one thing the folk were always desirous of was that the Stranger, especially if of the better sort, should go and listen to the echo in their celebrated Gallery of Echoes, and hear what other people heard there. Otherwise they did not consider it so lucky as to be free from risk to have these Strangers among them; so none were invited to quit the Sojourners' House until after they had been well tried with the echoes, and had satisfied the people that they understood what they heard in the gallery. Not that this test was applied openly, as a rule, or at all suddenly. It was used as gradually as a thumbscrew, and very little was said about it, except in a covert way. In general, the Silver Strangers soon came to hear the echoes as others did; the Golden Strangers were much more hard of hearing, or of understanding, and so the townsfolk took great pains with them. When a Stranger came whom they were very particularly desirous to have among them as one of themselves, they tried everything you can think of, especially at church and all that, you know: they had hymns and collects especially for such people, and they would put them into their litany in a sly way, so as to work upon their feelings. When the Strangers proved after all to be too wise or too innocent to be drawn in, they would turn spiteful,—oh, dreadfully spiteful. Why, when they came to such words as "especially for those who will not understand our celebrated echoes," I have seen the whole congregation turn and fix their eyes with a rude stare upon the new-comer. Of course this was very vexing, and sometimes they gained a point, for perhaps the poor man said, "Confound your celebrated echoes!" *or worse than that*; and it was considered a sign of giving in when any one lost his temper, so they often had him that way.

IV.

THIS town was built upon a slope, and the great gathering-place for the people, in hours when they were, as you may say, off duty, was in a beautiful valley at the foot of the hill. This was their parade-ground, where the company assembled to feel in common how they lived their life, and sing songs—sometimes sacred ones, for they patronized religion—and converse about love and duty, and business, and truth, and faith and hope and charity, and education and philanthropy, and the justices and the new laws, and all the new things in general. Some people used to call this Vanity Fair, but that was considered a great insult to the townsfolk. However, of course the company was very mixed, though none but respectable persons were allowed there, and the highest men and women in the place used to be of the company.

At one end of the valley was a cavern, with its mouth or ear so placed that it caught all the talk and the songs, and took them in; indeed you may say it caught all the sighs and the laughter, and perhaps more than that. From this cavern there went up a winding way, all underground, to the very topmost platform of the hill. On the topmost platform of the hill were shady trees, with seats for lovers and friends and old people, and near that mouth of the winding way which opened on to this beautiful green platform was a seat called the Echo Seat. That was because you sat there and listened to the confused murmur which, from the people below, came up the winding way, and thus distributed itself in echoes all around the hill.

What sometimes happened was this. If a Silver Stranger or a Golden Stranger came to the town and sat in the Echo Chair, he was at first much disturbed and confused. The echoes seemed good-natured and instructive, and highly respectable, and he perhaps tried to like them. But this seldom lasted long. When it was known that the Stranger was there the echoes were thicker, louder, and stronger than usual; and in some cases the new-comer could not endure them. "If I stay here and listen much longer I shall go mad or go wicked," he would say to himself. Just then, for he was always watched in such cases, he would find himself in the presence of a select company of the townspeople, who would be very friendly, and say, "Well, how do you like our celebrated echoes? What did you hear them say?" Sometimes the answer was one thing; sometimes it was another; sometimes it was angry; sometimes it was clever; and sometimes—I believe usually—it was rather stupid than otherwise. But the townspeople could tell in a moment, by your answer, whether you liked their echoes and would keep the secret of them—the answers of the Stranger were sure to betray him—and, the more honest he was, the sooner. It was fortunate for the townspeople that the answers were so often rather stupid, because they gave all the clever men and women such a chance of making the new-comer uneasy, and also of proving that he was in the wrong, and had misheard the echoes. So they would begin to make politely ironical remarks, and the attendance at the Sojourners' House would fall off; and at last the Silver or Golden Stranger would be glad to take his departure. For the citizens of the place did not want any of them, Silver or Golden, unless they heard in the echoes exactly what made it certain that they would keep the secrets of the Fair, and in time do their own part towards composing the echoes. A few, a very few, of such strangers were entrapped, and made what you may call Prisoners of the Fair; and very useful they were. These were the doubtful cases: it was never quite clear what they had heard in the echoes, so the citizens had given them the benefit of the doubt, and for their own reasons made friends with them. They never lived long, and were never happy; but they used to do a great deal to make the echoes less alarming, and so the townspeople used to pretend to be very proud of these Prisoners of the Fair.

V.

THE artist whom we saw in the market-place was one of these Prisoners of the Fair, and was now rapidly forgetting what the best of it and the Golden Stranger were like. But he was very much struck with the dovelike Damsel who had just arrived. At first he only thought of sending her a bouquet; but that very night he had disturbed dreams, and when he saw her at church he found he could not look her in the face. When she had first caught his eye in the market-place, he had thought to himself what a beautiful model she would make; but in a very short time he would as soon have thought of praying for an angel in heaven for a model. In the meantime the Strange Damsel could not make out the echoes so as to please the townspeople. They had several times tried her, but she only said she did not understand, only she was afraid she did not like them: one time they thought they would catch her, so they gave a children's party down in the valley, and got her to go up and listen in the Chair.

"Ah!" says she, with a smile, "now I begin to think I understand a little. Didn't I hear 'Little Bo-Peep'?"

So they were very pleased, and sent a simple message down the hill to tell them to "do Little Bo-Peep over again." And they did; but this time the Stranger Maiden was not so pleased. "Stop!" said she, "that is not correct—

Little Bo-Peep
She killed her sheep
Because she wouldn't mind em—

What has somebody been doing?"

Now, that was because it was done on purpose. A Golden Stranger could always tell when the echoes were made on purpose, unless he allowed himself to get used to the trick, and then he would lose his quickness of sense.

VI.

"WE will have another trial or two, and then if that fails, we will let the hussey go," said Madam Townswoman the First.

"It's a very troublesome case," says Madam Townswoman the Second. "I do believe the reason she cannot make out our beautiful echoes properly is because she has not learnt grammar—at least, not properly."

"Orthography, etymology, syntax, and prosody are great acquirements."

"Yes, neighbour; but what do you say to Logical Parsing?"

"Ah, yes! Subject and predicate, and all that."

"Let us club together, and send her some treatises on Grammar, and on Society, and Usefulness, and suchlike."

So they did, and the Strange Damsel got them.

But two of the rich old magnates of the town put their heads together about that time, and winked and nodded at each other very much, and it turned out that the young artist had been seen sitting in the Chair of Echoes, with the Damsel, and some even said, with his arm round her waist, and her head leaning on his shoulder.

"He will soon teach her. He will explain our celebrated echoes, and she will hear nothing but what is good in them, and she will settle down and be like the rest of us," said the Judge.

"And cease to be impracticable and useless," said the Clergyman, smiling back to his learned friend.

VII.

So ONE exquisitely beautiful moonlight night, when it had been found out somehow that the lovers were going up to the hill-top—they were very fond of high places, especially at night—the townspeople decided to have a more magnificent Fair down below than had ever been seen in the valley, and a most splendid company there was, I can tell you, and most improving conversation, science, morality, commerce, theology, philanthropy, wit, beauty, — oh! everything that makes the world go round. At the height of the entertainment, when the conversation and the songs and the speeches were at their very very best, a select embassy of the townspeople, composed of both ladies and gentlemen, stole softly upon the young people, who sat in the Chair of Echoes.

"Ahem!" said one, not wanting to be rude.

"A beautiful night!" said another, by way of giving notice that people were near.

And then, after a graceful turn or two on the grass, the company approached the artist and the Maiden, and began talking about the echoes.

"Echoes?" said the young artist: "I have heard nothing."

"Nor have I," said the Damsel.

"Nothing? nothing?" shrieked the fine ladies.

"Our echoes were never finer," said the gentlemen.

"Ah, I hear now," said the Maiden, and she stopped her ears with a face full of pain; and the young artist drew her arm tenderly but firmly under his own, and led her away into the winding boscage, where they were soon lost to sight, for at that moment thick clouds rushed suddenly over the moon, and the exploring company were left themselves in darkness. Louder and louder came the echoes of song and laughter from below, and more and more genially and yet confusedly they were echoed backwards and forwards hither and thither among the shady places of the hill. The townsfolk, who were now in darkness, could not find their way about well; but very soon a band of their own friends, with torches, came hurrying up in search of them. Then they all joined in pursuing the fugitives down the opposite side of the hill; for their rage and curiosity were extreme. At daybreak, descending the utmost slope, which curves abruptly to the sea, they caught a distant glimpse of their lost friends. The white-sailed shallop which bore them was just putting off from the shore, and the ocean stretched, calm and beautiful, to the horizon. A loud, long, mocking laugh burst from the lips of the townspeople; but there was a little heart-ache in it, especially in the bosoms of the women. The departing lovers did not seem to hear it, though the wind set that way, as it filled their canvas.

"I suppose," said one wise man, "that is what our artist friend, when he first visited our town, used to call 'launching out into the infinite.'"

"I pray that he may come safe back," said another, who was also very pious.

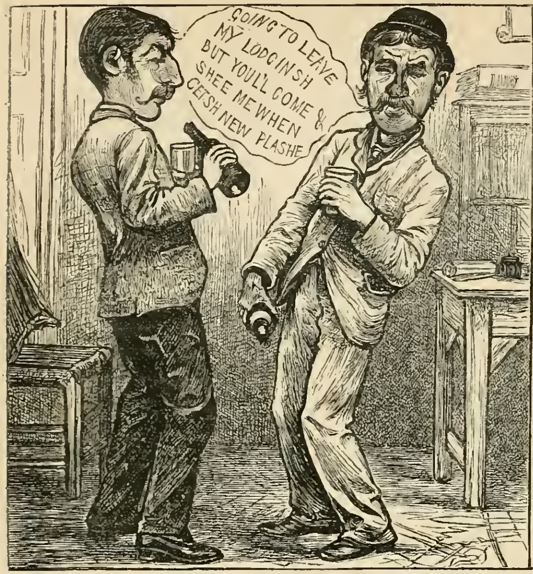
"And I am sure I wish him no harm," said a lady, straining her eyes after the lessening sails. "But as for that hussey, if there is anything I hate it is deceit."

VIII.

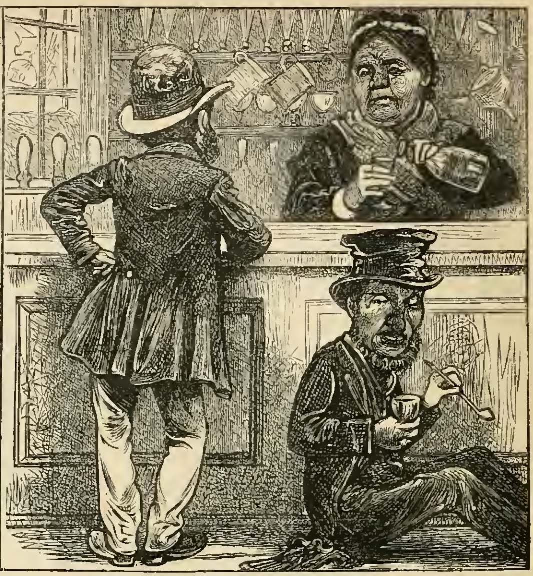
So CERTAIN had the friendly conspirators elt of their prey this time, that they had ordered an unusually sumptuous repast to be prepared in the innermost pavilion of the Fair for the Artist and the Stranger, who was that night intended to catch the true accent of the echoes. This was now distributed among the poor, to the music of drum and trumpet. They were very genial in this town. I *have* been assured that there never was a place like it. I have also been informed that there was once, but that it has been done away with. Can it indeed be that I dreamt it all?

MATTHEW BROWNE.

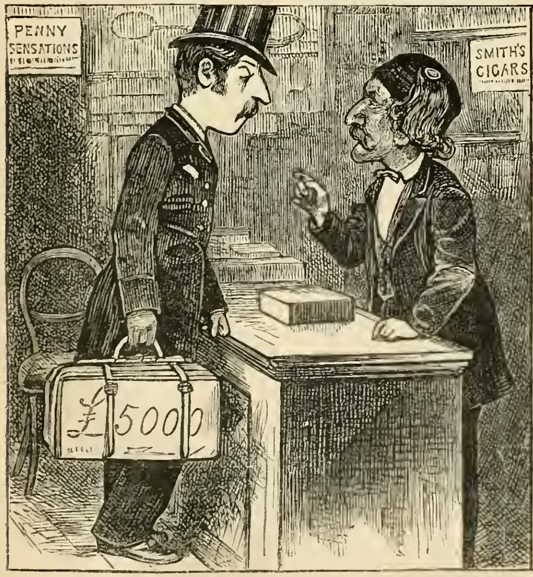
MODERN ADVERTISEMENTS EMBELLISHED.


GOING TO LEAVE MY LODGINSH BUT YOU'LL COME & SHEE ME WHEN GETSH NEW PLASHE

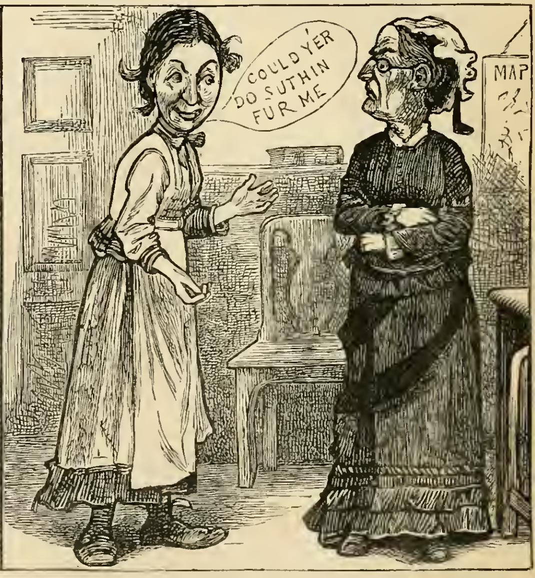
A PROFESSIONAL GENTLEMAN wishes to BOARD with a Christian family, where he would be received as one of them. Terms not so much an object as social adaptability. —Address S. A. M., 21, Downers-street, Strand.



TWO HUNDRED POUNDS CASH.—FREE PUBLIC HOUSE. Lease 20 years. Genuine snug concern. Wife's dislike to business the cause of selling. Should be seen at once.—Apply to Mr. Bung, Jigger's Arms, Swizzleton-st., Barking.

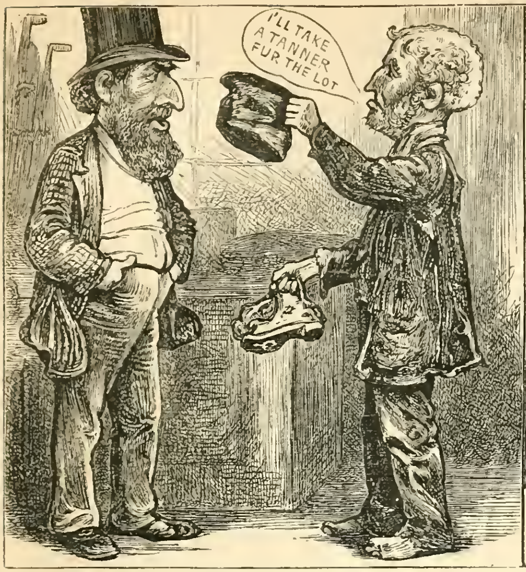

PENNY SENSATIONS
SMITH'S CIGARS
£500

LOAN or PARTNERSHIP.—WANTED, £70 immediately, by an energetic Gentleman barely past the meridian of life, for the purpose of extending one of the most lucrative businesses in this vast metropolis. Good security given, or would accept as partner a Gentleman with £5000. No previous knowledge necessary.—Apply, H. Walker, 62, Chisull-row, Ludgate-hill.

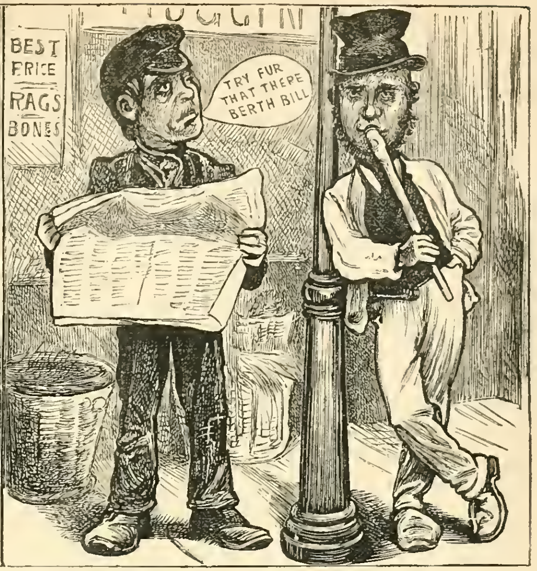

COULD YER DO SUTHIN FUR ME
MAP

TO LADIES of NEGLECTED EDUCATION. A Single Lady, whose singularly persuasive manners and high moral culture, combined with rare perspicuity of intellect, render her most capable of educating highly the most obtuse of minds, has now a VACANCY for one of the above.—Apply to Mrs. Grimper, Rose Villa, Notting-hill.

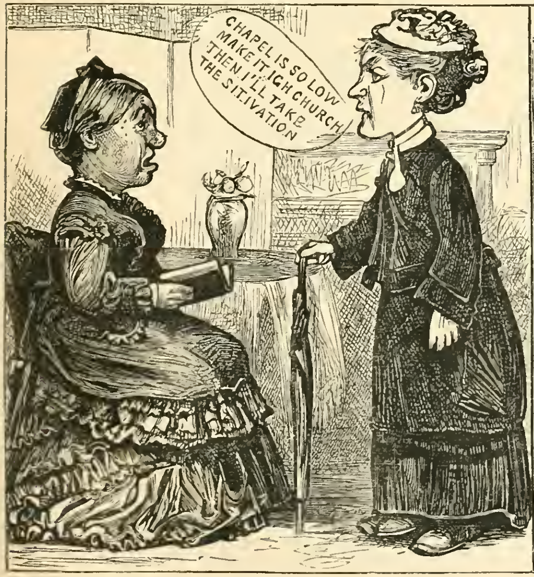
MODERN ADVERTISEMENTS EMBELLISHED.


I'LL TAKE A TANNER FUR THE LOT

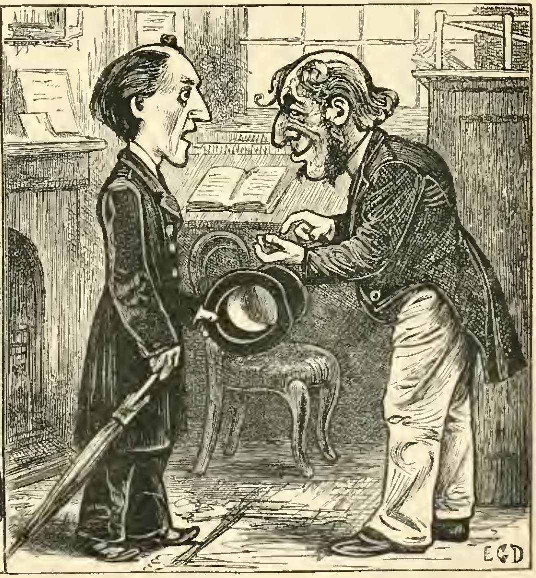
CYPRUS ! CYPRUS ! CYPRUS !—Ladies and Gentlemen, increase your incomes by selling your LEFT-OFF CLOTHES, Boots, Hats, &c., to Mr. JACOB JOB, who, having a large Government order for second-hand wearing apparel, is enabled to give the largest price. Terms cash.—24, Solomon-street, Covent-garden.


BEST PRICE
RAGS
BONES
TRY FUR THAT THERE BERTH BILL

WANTED, a Church of England Young Man, as PORTER; one who has been some time in a bank, and is capable of cleaning plate preferred; some slight knowledge of the jewellery business would be an advantage. Good references indispensable.—Apply to Messrs. Davis and Gilten, Stregunter-street, Hanover-square.


CHAPEL IS SO LOW MAKE IT IGH CHURCH THEN I'LL TAKE THE SITIVATION

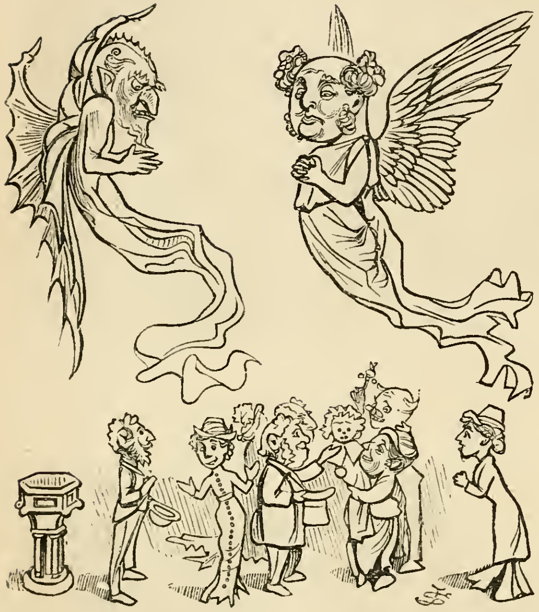
WANTED, a single-handed HOUSE-MAID, who would thoroughly appreciate a comfortable home, in an elderly Christian Lady's family. She must thoroughly understand her duties and attend chapel three times on Sundays. Wages £4. Apply to Mrs. Hunter, 12, Crumpton-road, Brixton.



MONEY on EASY TERMS.—Mr. GRABALL is prepared to make immediate ADVANCES to Gentlemen in *bonâ fide* situations at salaries from £100 per annum on note of hand only. No questions asked. Money advanced with or without sureties, distance no object.—Apply personally, or state amount to Mr. Graball, 2, Trickle-court, Charing-cross.

THE GOOD SPIRIT OF SPACE;

Or, an Unappreciated Genius.



(Scene—The Earth. *Two* Spirits—*the malevolent* Spirit of Crowdedness *and the benevolent* Spirit of Space—*hovering.*)

Chorus of Mortals, *grumbling.*

Every freshly occurring fact
  Painfully tends to prove
Awfully tightly the world is packt,—
  Nobody's room to move.
Say that a dozen of hapless men
  Into the world are prest,
One of the dozen arriving ten
  Minutes before the rest;
He, having luckily won the race,
  Just by a shave, at birth,
Collars the only untaken place
  On the encumbered earth;
Then do the rest of 'em, standing by,
  Kicking their heels in vain,
Wait till the winner shall kindly die
  Leaving his place again.
Shortly—(so rapidly fills the land,
  Truly the mind it scares!)—
Everybody will have to stand,
  Having no room for chairs!

The Spirit of Space.

So far so good; yet how each mortal shelves
  His common sense is quite beyond believing,
  No smack of inconsistency perceiving:
Just listen how they contradict themselves.

Joyful chorus of Mortals *at a christening.*

Here's a host of little dears,
  Freshly in the world arriving,
  Aren't they plump and round and thriving
Pray excuse our joyful tears,
  Born of joy no effort smothers!
  Aren't they—*aren't* they like their mothers?
    (*With a burst*) Tral lal la!

Thirty little mortals more
  Come to make creation gladsome!
  Don't we only wish *we* had some—
Any number—say a score!
  All their future joy be-wreathing,
  More especially their teething!
    (*Uncontrollably*) Tral lal la!

Horrified chorus of the same Mortals, *reading their newspapers.*

Here's a sad disaster—
  Here's a dozen more!
Each is sadder, vaster
  Than the one before.
Here are vessels jam in
  Other vessels' sides;

Desolating famine
China overrides;
Wreck and conflagration,
Now they have their run,
Decimate creation,
Horrifying one!
Dread Destruction's banner
Seems to be unfurled
In the wildest manner—
What an awful world!

SPIRIT of CROWDEDNESS.

You see, these mortals rate you as they should.

SPIRIT of SPACE (*unhappily*).

Oh! bitterness too bitter to be stated,
To feel that one is unappreciated
In all one's greatest efforts after Good!
No matter, I will labour for awhile
To thwart thy evil machinations striving,
And wait until that better time's arriving
When men shall greet me in a fairer style.

SPIRIT of CROWDEDNESS.

I fear thee not; in vain thy threats are hurled:
For years untold, through all the earth's duration,
Triumph increasing and without cessation
Has crowned my plans to overcrowd the world.
Already (so my triumph grows and spreads)
I see—thy paltry opposition spurning—
The time when men shall lack the space for turning,
And have to walk on one another's heads!
'T is thus the hatred I have borne to man
Shall find its sharp and fitting culmination;
Meanwhile the victims of my visitation
Are blindly striving to assist my plan.

So well my spells have undermined their wit,
That men receive with joyousness and mirth
All things that aid the crowding of the earth,
Condemning such as tend to lessen it.

SPIRIT of SPACE.

Too true, alas! the greater shame is thine.
These mortals labour under some delusion.
But hear—I come to say, to thy confusion,
To-day at least the victory is mine.
For certain mortals, having minds too clear,
Too full of light, for all thy glamour's blinding,
Have sworn in all to aid me, nobly binding
Themselves to thwart thee in thy base career.
The happiness of men their only goal,
They let my word and lofty reason guide them
Whatever woe or punishment betide them:
Behold, at once, one such devoted soul.

(The SPIRIT of SPACE *waves his wand, and a* RAILWAY SHUNTER *appears.*)

Song of the Good Shunter.

In days gone by the cumuli
Of ignorance my reason clouded,
It struck me not so fair a spot
As this our world should not be crowded;
I did not know what evils flow
From superflux of population,
Nor realize how right and wise
Is well-directed decimation.

So sharply burst the light, at first
My reason marvelled what the change meant
Till something bade me up and aid
The said beneficent arrangement.
"Can one," I said, "so humbly bred
Assist so vast a reformation?"
Yes! Was it not my happy lot
To be a shunter at a station?

With zealous jerk the points I'd work,
And good intent and faith for masters,
And cause what men of cloudy ken
Described as "terrible disasters."
With scorn I met inspector's threat
And chairman's frequent irritation,
And made it plain reproof is vain
For one intent on decimation.

(*He runs an express into a mineral train. The good* SPIRIT *of* SPACE *blesses him, while the evil* SPIRIT *of* CROWDEDNESS *glares with rage. The* SHUNTER *and his surroundings disappear.*)

(*Horrified chorus of misguided* Mortals *reading the news.*)

Horror inducing pallidity!
Here's a disaster again:
Passenger-run with rapidity

Into a mineral-train!
Villain who turned it misguidedly
Ought to be punished decidedly!

SPIRIT of CROWD (*sneeringly*).

Thy work, as I perceive, still fails to please
The thankless mortals whom thou hast befriended.

SPIRIT of SPACE.

Oh, wait awhile—our strife is still unended:
Behold some other of my devotees.

(*Waves wand again; a* QUACK DOCTOR, *an* ADULTERATOR, *and other* Devotees *appear.*)

Chorus.

Long we've striven with devotion
In the interests of Space,
Buoyed and solaced by the notion
That we serve the human race.
Far removed from all addiction
To pecuniary gain,
We rejoice in self-restriction,
Insult, calumny, and pain.
Harsh and many our detractors;
By the world we are despised,
For as human benefactors
We are hardly recognized!
Crowdedness, with maw unsated,
Creeps, a horror, o'er the land,
Health and beauty violated
By its Vandalistic hand;
Silence, peace, and sweet seclusion
From the recollection fade
In the deafening confusion
Overcrowdedness had made.
Let not Space the Decimator
In derision turn its back
On the poor Adulterator,
Or the unpretending Quack!

(*The* SPIRIT of CROWDEDNESS, *in derision, lifts a veil and reveals the earthly martyrdom of the* SHUNTER, ADULTERATOR, QUACK, *and other* Devotees. *The* SPIRIT of SPACE *turns away with a sigh.*)

SPIRIT of CROWDEDNESS.

Good reason truly for thy sighing—see
The fate for these thy devotees provided:
I pray you mark, *my* choice is better guided;
A fairer lot for those who work for ME!

(*Waves wand.* A SPECULATIVE BUILDER *appears.*

SPECULATIVE BUILDER.

Come, Crowdedness, on in a torrent;
Three things where the space is for one;
For Emptiness aye is abhorrent
And Space is an evil to shun!
Come, Multitude, surging and seething;
What mortal with intellect can
Imagine that spaces for breathing
Are truly essential to man?
Come, labyrinth cities, collected
And limitless mazes of bricks;
One dozen of houses erected
Wherever there's standing for six.

(*The World becomes more and more crowded; men have no longer room to walk, vegetation disappears, starvation sets in. Then the eyes of* Mortals *suddenly open.*)

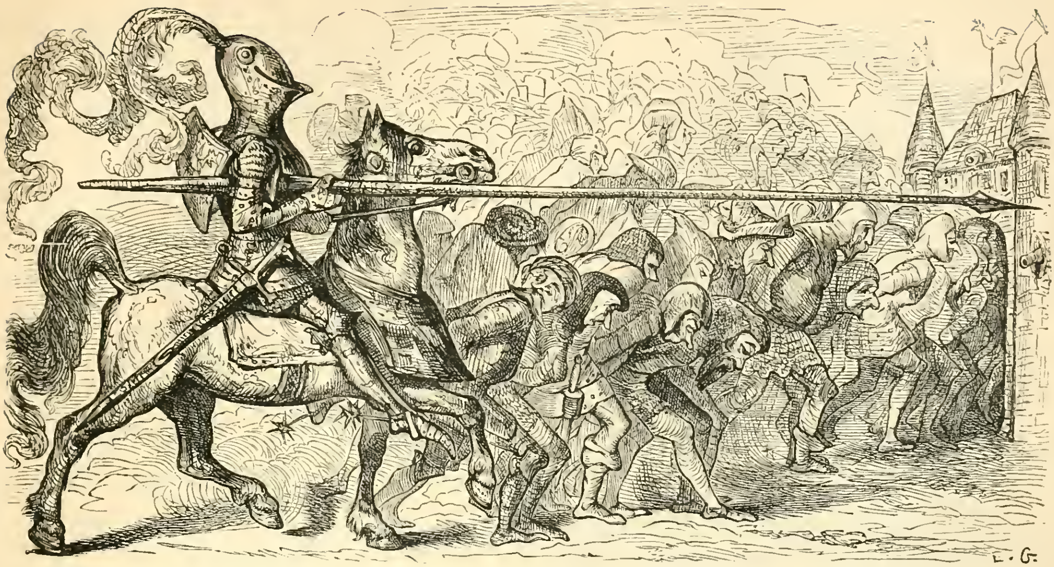
Chorus of astounded Mortals.

Goodness gracious! Why, we've been
Victims of hallucination
Ever since the dawn was seen
In the morning of creation!
Ever blindly casting blame,
Insult, calumny, detraction,
Over those whose noble aim
Was but human benefaction!
Ever from our wrath they fled
As the quarry from the hunter,—
Honour to the martyred head
Of that most immortal Shunter.
Oh that Fate would give him back
(Though it's not the wont of Fate)—or
That ill-treated, noble Quack,
Or that good Adulterator!
Never do our thoughts depart
From the horrors that await us!
Some one with a feeling heart
Come and gently decimate us!

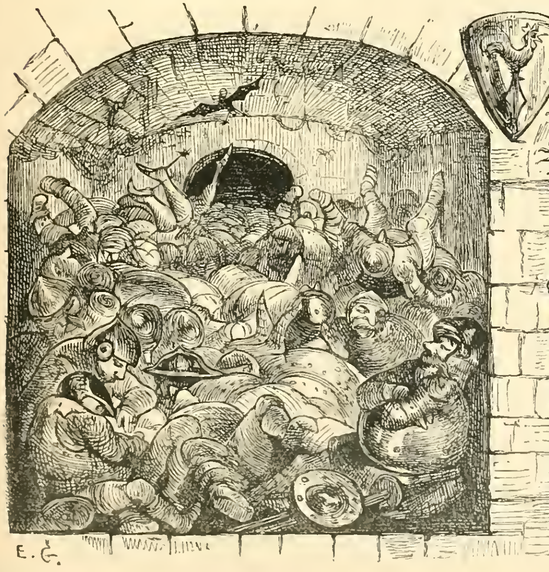
(*The* DEMON of CROWDEDNESS, *unmasked, vanishes with a shriek, while the good* SPIRIT of SPACE *soars triumphantly.*)

J. F. SULLIVAN.

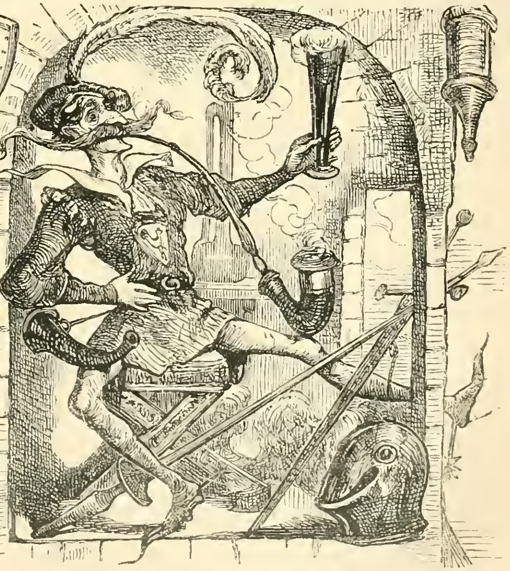
A TALE OF CHIVALRY.



SIR GUIDALANCE was a brave knight, and of gigantic power; numbers could not subdue him, treachery *might*. In one of his battles he single-handed took a great company of prisoners, and drove them to his stronghold at Humbledown Tower.

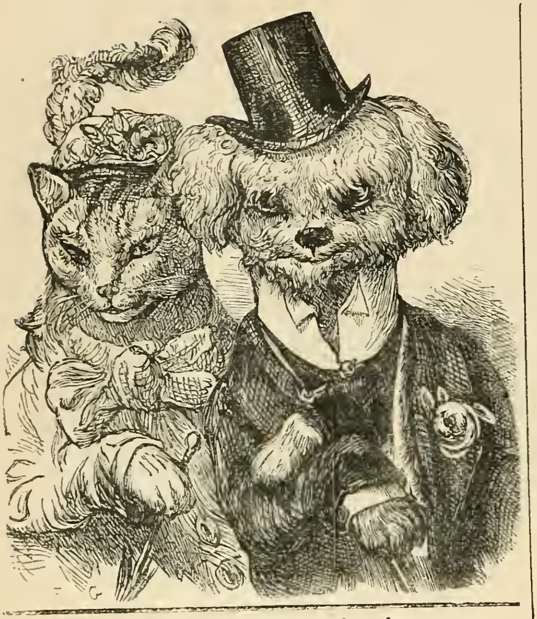


This is the dungeon, five thousand feet below the surface, where he confined the living testimony of his mighty prowess.



This is how the doughty SIR GUIDALANCE enjoyed himself in his paternal stronghold at Humbledown after the battle.

MR. BARKER AND HIS BRIDE.



A GENTLEMAN I used to know,
  About a dozen years ago,
I'd like to introduce to fame—
  And Mr. Barker was his name.
He was as genial a man
  As ever I expect to scan
(And that is what he seemed to be
  To other men as well as me).
He used to rather come the swell,
  In manner spick and span(iel);
But some, in spite of splendid "tog,"
  Considered him a "jolly dog."
He'd always, when you met him, quote
  Some mirth-inspiring anecdote,
In which I've seldom known him fail—
  He was so waggish with his tale.

Now, Mr. Barker had a wife,
  He called the solace of his life;
A gentle creature, soft and sleek,
  And most preposterously meek
(That is, at least, as I've been told,
  The character she wished to hold).
Her timid air, which struck the mind,
  Said pleadingly, "Oh, *do* be kind!"
Which quite disarmed the cynic's frown,
  And made him long to stroke her down;
It's frequently been said of her
  That you might almost hear her purr!
Though people *have* been heard to say,
  In some inexplicable way,
Complete success became her part
  In any pur-puss she'd at heart.

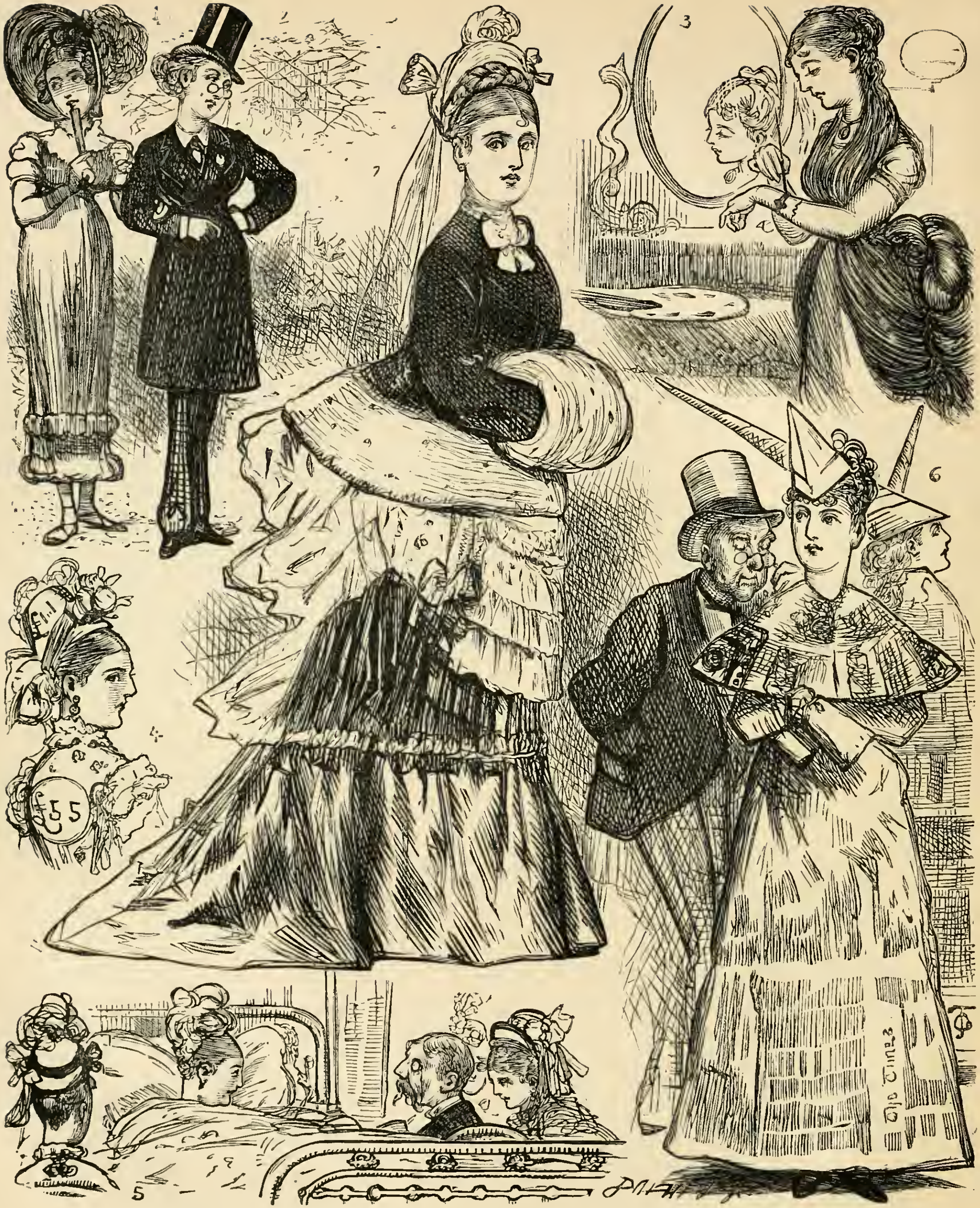
The pair I thus present to view
  Did nothing else but bill and coo
(Or so I used to then believe)
  From morning grey to "dewy eve."
When any one was sitting by,
  They'd gently heave the lover's sigh,
And fondly squeeze each other's hand;
  And if Society's demand
Should separate them for awhile,
  They'd catch each other's eye and smile.
With leisure from my own affairs
  I've often watched that smile of theirs.
With no desire to make a fuss,
  I'd indicate its meaning thus:–
Said hers, "For *thee* I draw my breath!"
  Said his, "My life! I'm thine till death!"

  But o'er us all there came a doubt,
Reports commenced to fly about
  Of frequently-occurring rows
'Twixt Mr. Barker and his spouse.
  'T was said, for all so blithe a chap,
He knew the way to snarl and snap;
  That, though his oaths might well affright,
His bark was *better* than his bite.
  'T was said his wife was quite his match,
And knew the way to claw and scratch;
  'T was said, for all she looked so fair,
She'd sometimes spit and often swear.
  'T was said, although they seemed to own
The life of Darby and of Joan,
  They found the marriage-tie a clog,
And led the life of cat and dog!

JOHN W. HOUGHTO

AMDEN PRESS, N.W.

FUN.
EVERY WEDNESDAY.
ONE PENNY.



HOW TO DRESS ON NEXT TO NOTHING A YEAR.

1st Plan.—Use up your great-grandmother's old clothes.

2nd ,, Wear your husband's cast-off apparel. You can pretend you are a champion of woman's rights.

3rd ,, Cultivate your hair, and dress it so that it may dress you. Gloves, collars, cuffs, &c., painted on the skin in oil, and warranted to wash.

4th Plan.—Be a walking advertisement to an enterprising milliner.

5th ,, Go in for being an interesting invalid, and never get up. Have your "At Homes," &c., in your bed-room.

6th ,, Nothing so warm as newspapers. Clothe yourself in "the very latest intelligence."

7th ,, Dress as gorgeously as you please, and don't pay.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE
How to Dress on Next to Nothing a Year	GORDON THOMSON	*Frontispiece.*
A Bird of Another Feather	T. HOOD	11
My Quiet Fellow-Traveller	LAURA ADEY	12
A Day's Fishing in the Sea	H. SANDERCOCK	16
Making a Figure	T. ARCHER	18
English History in a New Light	J. MOYR SMITH	25
The Pilot's Story	EDWARD CAPERN	26
Curried Cow	DOD GRILE	27
"That dangerous fellow, Shimmen"	H. T. F. A. FRASER	31
Hunting. From a New Point of View	ERNEST GRISET T. H.	33
My Protector Jedediah	CHARLES WILLIAMS	34
The Corn-cutter's Story	JOHN STEBBING	36
Two Knights and a Dey	W. J. WIEGAND	40
Hooked Foul	W. SENIOR	42
Difference of Opinion	J. F. SULLIVAN	48
Fishing: An Allegory	ERNEST GRISET T. H.	49
The Family Cat	PRENTICE MULFORD	50
My Play	JOHN THOMSON	52
Smoking Fragments	H. J. M. S.	54
Very Fishy. Communicated by Submarine Telegraph	GORDON THOMSON	56
A Clerkenwell Calamity	HENRY J. M. SAMPSON	58
The Young Athlete	J. F. SULLIVAN	65
The Poets' Mission	J. F. SULLIVAN	66
The Soberwit Club	WILLIAM SAWYER	66
My Pilgrimage	T. H.	71
Raising the Wind: A Comedy of several Acts	HARRY TUCK	72
Polly's Wings	FRANCES FREELING BRODERIP	74
A Yankee Story	G. R. WADLEIGH	78
The Hare and Many Friends	T. H. ERNEST GRISET	79
Modern Themes in Ancient Guise	J. MOYR SMITH	81
My Double and I	W. D. L'ESTRANGE	82
The Faith of the Children	AUTHOR OF "LILLIPUT LEVEE"	85
Eccentric Concentric Circles	WILLIAM BRUNTON	88
How I Lost my Intended	ALFRED B. PHILLIPS	89
The Garden of Eden	MATTHEW BROWNE	91
Nelly's Necklace	J. ASHBY-STERRY	95
The Queen of the May	E. G. DALZIEL	96
The Story of a Man with a "Cast" in his Eye	GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA	98
Miss Miles, the Telegraph Girl	CHARLES G. LELAND	106
Tympkyns and his Hats: A True Story of Club Life	GORDON THOMSON	108
Turkey in France	T. HOOD	110
Walnuts for Wisdom Teeth	T. H. HARRY TUCK	112

MR. STREETER,

37 CONDUIT STREET, FIVE DOORS FROM BOND STREET
LONDON, W.,

SOLE INTRODUCER OF

18-CARAT GOLD AND GEM JEWELLERY, MACHINE-MADE.

Machine-made Jewellery, as manufactured by Mr. STREETER, possesses the following advantages:—

1st. QUALITY: The Gold used is 18-Carat, containing alloy to the extent necessary for the working of the metal, AND NO MORE, and is truly described as "honestly and legally Gold."

2nd. PRICE: The cost of production being greatly lessened, a corresponding reduction is made to the purchaser.

3rd. SECURITY FROM FRAUD: A guarantee of the quality is given on the invoice.

Illustrated Catalogue post-free.

MR. STREETER'S

MACHINE-MADE ENGLISH LEVER WATCHES AND CLOCKS.

These productions demand attention for the following important reasons:—

1st. Interchangeability of parts. The fitting being regulated by a mathematical system, the errors and accidents incidental to hand-fitting are altogether avoided.

2nd. Hard-rolled wrought brass and highly-tempered steel are used in place of cast and untempered metals, and the result arising from superior finish, increased strength, and greater durability, is the utmost economy of keeping in order.

3rd. Economy in Repairs:—In the event of parts being broken, or otherwise injured by accident or rust, new pieces can be supplied at a less price than would be charged for repairing the parts so injured.

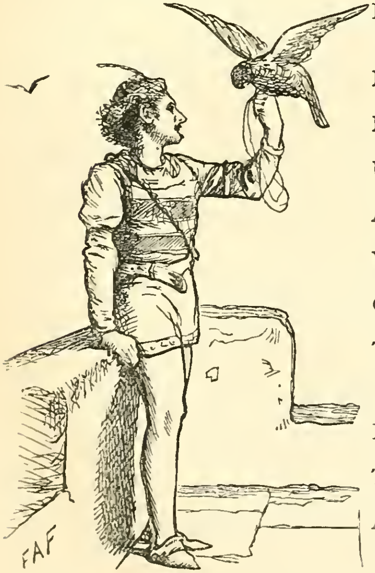
4th. Reduction in price to the purchaser is fully 30 per cent.

Illustrated Catalogue post-free.

MR. STREETER,
37 Conduit Street, Bond Street, London, W.
FACTORY—BURLINGTON STEAM WORKS, SAVILE ROW

TOM HOOD'S COMIC ANNUAL
FAME
TIME
EDITOR
ARTIST
AUTHOR

A BIRD OF ANOTHER FEATHER.



YESTREEN, when I retired to bed,
I had a funny dream;
Imagination backward sped
Up History's ancient stream.
A falconer in fullest dress
Was teaching me his art;
Of tercel, eyass, hood, and jess
The terms I learnt by heart.

He flew his falcon to attack
The osprey, swan, and hern,
And showed me, when he wished it back,
The lure for its return.
I thought it was a noble sport,
I struggled to excel
My gentle teacher, and, in short,
I managed rather well.

The dream is o'er, and I to-day
Return to modern time;
But yet I 've something more to say,
If you will list my rhyme.
I 've been a witness in a case
For seven long mortal hours,
And, cross-examined, had to face
The counsel's keenest powers.

With courteous phrase and winning smiles
He led me gently on;
I fell a victim to his wiles;—
But how he changed anon!
"Oh, you 're prepared to swear to that!"
And "Now, sir, just take care!"
And "Come, be cautious what you 're at!"
With questions hard to bear.

And when he'd turned me inside out,
He turned me outside in;
I knew not what I was about,
My brain was all a-spin.
I 'm shaking now with nervous fright,
And since I left the Court
I 've changed my dream-opinion quite—
I don't think Hawkins sport!

T. HOOD.

MY QUIET FELLOW-TRAVELLER.

ONE bitterly cold evening last winter, I was sitting with my old schoolfellow, Charlie Foster, in my study—the most comfortable room in the house, arranged throughout with that regard to warmth and convenience only to be found in England, that land where comfort is the chief aim of at least two-thirds of the inhabitants.

"How jolly this is!" exclaimed Charlie, removing his cigar for a moment, and glancing round the cosy room. "I would rather be in than out such a night as this; just listen to the wind, how it howls and blusters, and yet not a breath gets in here. I must say this is not a bad corner to occupy in this weather, and I envy you not a little; you are such a lucky fellow, Harry, things always seem to go straight with you. I do believe you never had a slice of ill luck or a disagreeable adventure in your life."

"You are wrong there, my boy," replied I, "for once upon a time—it is a long while ago now, though—I had a *very* disagreeable adventure, which might have ended in my being hanged by mistake for some one else. You remember, no doubt, that sixteen years ago, instead of being one of the partners in the firm of Ross, Haviland, and Laurence, I was only a clerk in their office?"

"Yes, yes, I know," nodded Foster.

"Well, one day Mr. Haviland, not being well enough to go himself, sent me to C—— on some rather important business; some valuable documents had fallen into the hands of an obstinate, stupid old fellow, who had been guardian to a client of ours. The client was now of age, and wished to act for himself, and manage his own affairs, but old Brown, not considering him fit to do so, persisted in retaining the papers, and my mission was to persuade him to give them up quietly, and, in the event of his refusing, to threaten him with legal proceedings. I had great difficulty in inducing him to listen to reason, but when, at last, I succeeded, I telegraphed the news of my success to London, and a little later started homewards. I strolled down to the station, took a first-class ticket (the firm paid my travelling expenses, you know), and, after waiting for about ten minutes, the Edinburgh express came up, and I took my seat. As I got into the carriage, a tall good-looking young fellow, fashionably dressed, got out, and with that feeling of idle curiosity that sometimes comes over one when one has nothing to do, I put my head out of the window and looked after him; to my surprise he got into another carriage a little farther on. I began to wonder why on earth the fellow got out as I got in, and felt vaguely uncomfortable about it; however, when I perceived that the only other occupant of the carriage was an old gentleman, apparently fast asleep, I concluded that the young man wanted to smoke, and that the old gentleman, before addressing himself to his slumbers, had objected. This satisfied me, and I began to go over in my mind the events of the previous day. 'Well,' thought I, 'certainly I have managed the business very well. I expect I shall receive the compliments of the firm for it. I wonder if they will give me anything more substantial than compliments. If they do make me a present, it will be very acceptable just now,' said I to myself; for you see, Charlie, about eight weeks before, my dear Lizzie had presented me with a plump, red, pugnacious little sprite. Well, all the aunts and cousins—to say nothing of my wife—pronounced it the prettiest baby in the world, and I dare say I thought they were not far wrong; but one cannot sacrifice to a household idol of this kind without a little extra outlay, and for this reason and a few others not worth while mentioning, Lizzie and the baby were uppermost in my thoughts; I amused myself like a child with spending the money I hoped to receive in a dozen different ways for their benefit.

"At times I glanced at my fellow-traveller, who was all this time sound asleep in the corner directly opposite to me; his head was thrown back a bright yellow bandana hankerchief covered his face, and a thick railway rug was tucked tightly round him. Now, having started in a great hurry, as Ross and Haviland had got a hint that old Brown meant to make a lengthened tour on the Continent, I had forgotten to take my wrapper with me, so I contemplated my opposite neighbour with rather curious eyes, thinking how warm and comfortable he looked and how very cold I felt. I tried to forget my discomfort by reading over my papers, but when at last I got through them, I was as cold as before, or perhaps a little colder. However, we were getting near our journey's end, and that was some comfort. I determined to follow my fellow-traveller's example and take a doze. I wish heartily that I had not done so. First of all, I had a singularly unpleasant dream; for I dreamt that on arriving at home, I found the street-door open, and on going in, saw staircases in all directions. I went up the one I fancied led to my rooms; but it seemed as if I should never get there!—flight after flight I went up, and thought the stairs would never come to an end. Then suddenly I found myself in the drawing-room, and was struck by the cheerless look of everything; there was no fire in the grate, and the room was so dimly lighted, that at first I did not see Lizzie. Then I became aware that she was leaning back in the arm-chair, with the child lying in her lap; her eyes were closed, and her face was deadly pale. I cried out her name, but she did not move. With an undefined dread that seemed to make my heart contract, I rushed across the room to her; the floor heaved and swayed with my weight; I flung myself down by Lizzie's side, and had seized her hand, when the chair overturned with a crash, and she seemed to fall heavily into my arms!

"I awoke with a cry of terror—the train had run nearly off some facing points, and the tremendous jolt had thrown my fellow-traveller across my knees. I lifted him half up, but he made no effort to help himself. With difficulty I replaced him on the seat; the head dropped back into the old position, and as the light now fell on the face, I saw to my horror that the man was dead.

"I fell back into my seat, gasping for breath; but the next instant I started up, and went to the farther side of the carriage. 'Dead,' said I to myself, 'no, it's impossible, he cannot be dead;' and turning hurriedly towards the old gentleman, I endeavoured to stammer out a possible hope that the fall had not hurt him. It would not do; the words died away on my lips. I felt the fact of his death was but too true, and the folly of asking a corpse if a fall had hurt it crossed my mind, and gave me an absurd inclination to laugh, though I never felt less merry in my life.

"Then a terrible curiosity drew me back almost against my will, to look again at the lifeless man. The blue glazed eyes were wide open, the jaw slightly dropped; the once ruddy colour had settled in patches of dark purple in the cheeks. He was a tall stout man, apparently about sixty-five, and must have been handsome when alive; indeed, the face would have been handsome still, but that the half-open mouth and sightless stare gave him such a ghastly appearance.

"The bad dream I had had, the sudden startling awakening, and then the horrid certainty that I had been travelling all the way with a corpse, utterly unnerved me, and I vainly endeavoured to regain my composure. I could only gaze on the dead face before me with vague feelings of wonder and distress.

"Well, Charlie, I did about the most foolish thing I could have done," continued I. "A shrill whistle and the slackening of the speed announced our approach to Highgate, and in another moment the lamps at the station flashed their light in and out of the carriage window, as we passed up to the platform. With a desperate feeling that, as after all it was no business of mine, I might as well try to escape a heap of questions that I could not answer, I snatched up the old man's yellow handkerchief, flung it over his face, seized my travelling bag, and sprang out of the carriage.

"I remember well the nervous dread which came over me that the body would be discovered before I could give up my ticket and get clear of the station. No one stopped me, however. I hailed a cab, jumped in, and in ten minutes more was safely deposited at my door; there I dismissed the cabman with a double fare, and in another minute I stood in my bright cheerful sitting-room, with my dear wife clinging to my arm.

"Everything was as unlike my dream as possible. Lizzie looked rosy and smiling, baby was in his cradle, fast asleep, there was a bright fire in the grate, the supper-table was laid, and our neat little cook entered with a tray on which Lizzie seemed to have assembled all the good things she could think of. But, in spite of the comfort around me, I could not shake off a feeling of disquietude, and I suppose this was visible enough to a pair of loving eyes like my wife's, for she said,

"'What is the matter, dear? You look quite upset.'

"'Oh, Lizzie!' I burst out, 'I have had such a horrid adventure! I must tell you all about it.'

"'Not yet,' returned she. 'Sit down and take some supper first, and you shall tell me afterwards. However disagreeable your adventure was, it has not ended badly, since I have got you safe home again, my darling.' And thereupon she gave me a kiss, which had such a reviving effect on my spirits that I allowed myself to be seated at the table, and there, under the combined influence of my kind little wife's cheerful face, a good supper, and hot brandy and water, I began to recover myself, and proceeded to relate what had happened.

"Lizzie only laughed at the dream, and told me not to be superstitious, but looked grave and horrified enough over the account of the poor old man.

"When I had finished, my wife looked so anxious and discomposed that I began to regret having told her, but, suddenly raising her head, she said,

"'Dear Harry, ought you not to have stayed and explained what had happened? Might not people think that—that'—— Her voice broke and her eyes filled with tears.

"'By Jove! Lizzie,' cried I, starting up, 'you are right, of course! They might think I had a hand in the poor old fellow's death. Why, how could I be such a fool! I must go at once and give information at the police office.'

"I put on my coat as I was speaking, but the happy thought came a little too late; for just as Lizzie was handing me my hat, there was a tremendous peal at the front door! My wife and I looked at each other: she turned very pale, and I burst out laughing—that was not quite the right thing to do, perhaps, under the circumstances; but I could not help feeling amused, as well as embarrassed, at the scrape my folly had got me into, and I had not at the time the slightest idea of the disagreeable consequences that were to follow.

"'Cheer up, little woman,' said I 'it is all right; I did not do it, you know. Go to bed like a wise girl, and I will come back as soon as I can and tell you the sequel to my story.'

"Just then the cook opened the door, and said, 'Oh, if you please 'um, there's two pleacemen at the door, and they says, 'um, as they wants to speak to Master.'

"'Very well,' said I, 'I will go to them. It is very possible I shall be absent some time, cook, so take good care of your mistress till I come home;' and giving Lizzy a hasty kiss, I walked out and faced my uninvited visitors. Before I could speak a word, one of the men touched me on the shoulder, and said, 'You're wanted about that old gen'leman found murdered in a fuss-class railway carriage at 'ighgate station.'

"'Yes,' I said, 'I was just coming down to the police station about it.'

"'Oh! was you?' said the man, in a grimly facetious manner; and looking up, I saw he had stuck his tongue in his cheek, and was winking at his comrade. I longed to knock the fellow down, but knew it would hardly do to yield to the inclination; so I tried to console myself by remembering that I had only my own stupidity to thank for the unpleasant position I was in."

Foster grinned, and nodded a friendly and provoking agreement.

"Well," continued I, "the police station was not far off, and we were soon in the presence of the inspector. As we entered, he turned his calm grave face towards us, and fixed an inquiring look on me for an instant; then, signing to me to come forward, he said quietly, 'Will you state all you know about this affair?' and he pointed with his pen to a bench, on which the body of my late fellow-traveller was lying.

"I told him I knew nothing about the matter—

that I did not know the man was dead until a few minutes before the train stopped, and had been much startled and shocked at the discovery.

"'Why did you not give information as soon as you reached the station?' asked the inspector, drily.

"'Well, really,' stammered I, 'I do not know why; of course I ought to have done so. I can only account for my neglecting to do it by the fact of my being in a hurry to reach home, and the certainty that he would be seen by the officials directly, who would know better what to do than I did.'

"This was a sorry kind of explanation, and I was hardly surprised to find that it did not satisfy the police, but was, nevertheless, considerably dismayed when the inspector informed me I was a prisoner.

"'Poor little Lizzie,' thought I, 'what a fright she will be in.' However, I was permitted to send her a message to the effect that I was detained to give evidence, and that she was not to be uneasy.

"I was then taken in a cab to Bow Street, where I was charged with robbing and murdering an old gentleman, name unknown. My pockets were turned out, my papers, purse, and watch taken from me, and even my cigar-case, which was at the moment certainly the greatest privation. The charge was taken, and I was marched off to a cell and locked up. There, sitting on one bench with my legs on another, and my back fitted into an angle of the wall, I passed the night—such a miserable night it was, I should have been perished with cold had it not been for the kindness of the gaoler, who lent me a thick loose coat and a blanket. In wretched discomfort I dozed and dreamt, starting up now and then in bewilderment, wondering where I was, and then suddenly recollecting, sank back in my corner to doze and wake by turns till morning. After some cold coffee and bread, I was again taken before the Court and examined, and, to my horror, sent to the House of Detention till the inquest should be over, when it was intimated I should be brought up again.

"Well, to cut short my story, for I see you are yawning, I must tell you that the inquest was held, and the doctors discovered that the old gentleman was not murdered at all, but had died of apoplexy. So my offence was reduced to theft only: the old fellow's pockets had been emptied and his watch taken.

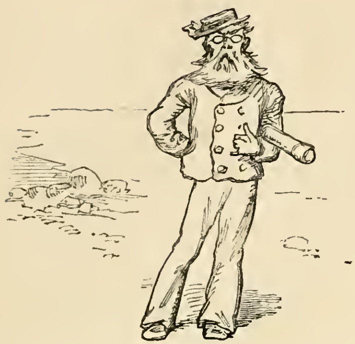
"I should, no doubt, have been sent back for further evidence, but that a prisoner was brought in, upon whom the stolen property had been found. This prisoner proved to be the identical tall, good-looking man who had left the railway carriage as I got in. The young fellow, who, on account of his gentlemanly stylish appearance, had got the sobriquet of 'the Prince,' was a professional thief; but on this occasion he had only been on a pleasure trip to the North, to see some friends, and he solemnly declared that he got into the carriage where the old gentleman was without any business-like intentions; that he always travelled first-class, because it was more comfortable, besides being 'genteeler.' He said—and, as you know, the statement was borne out by the medical evidence—that the old gentleman had a fit, and that though he did his best to assist him by opening the windows, loosening the old fellow's neckcloth, and holding up his head, he died in a few minutes. 'And then,' added 'the Prince,' 'I thought the poor old boy couldn't want his watch or his purse again, and I knew they would be very useful to me, so they changed pockets; and then I stuck him up in the corner where the other gentleman found him. But I do hope,' continued he, looking round the Court with an air of candid innocence, so well assumed that I felt inclined to applaud,—'I do hope no one would go to say as taking what nobody else didn't want was stealing.' Unfortunately, some rather important people could not be brought to see the matter from his point of view, and 'the Prince' did not visit his friends in the North again for some years.

"So ended my very unpleasant adventure, Charlie. I have taken many a day's journey since, but never again with such a very quiet fellow-traveller."

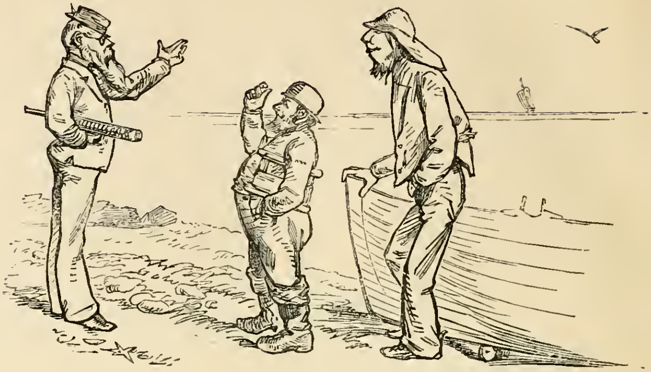
HARRY LAURENCE.

* * *

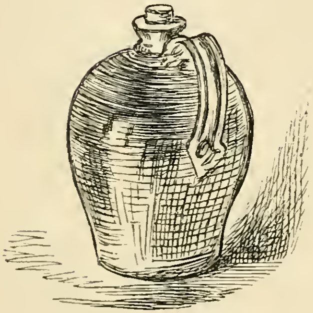
A DAY'S FISHING IN THE SEA.



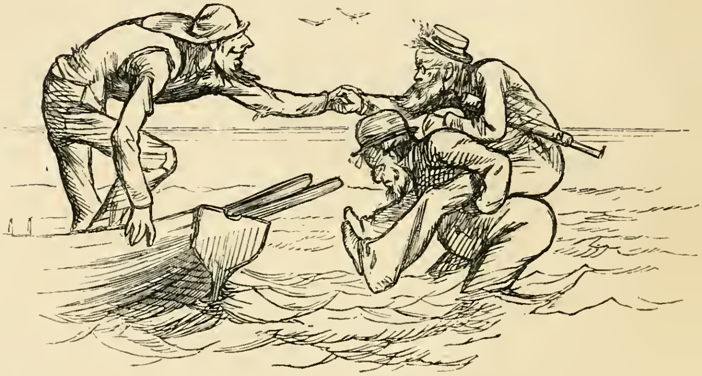
I



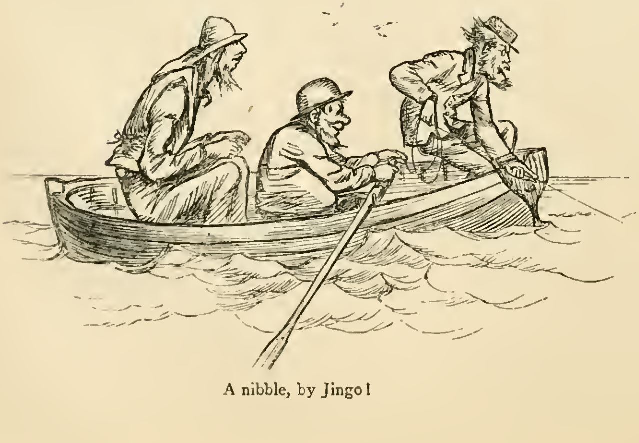
Engage my crew.



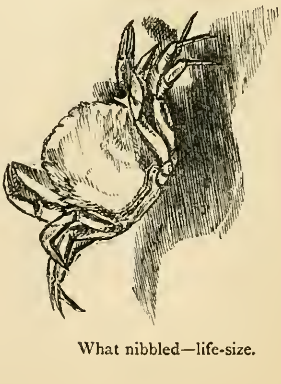
An important item in my outfit.



Embarkation : more convenient than elegant.

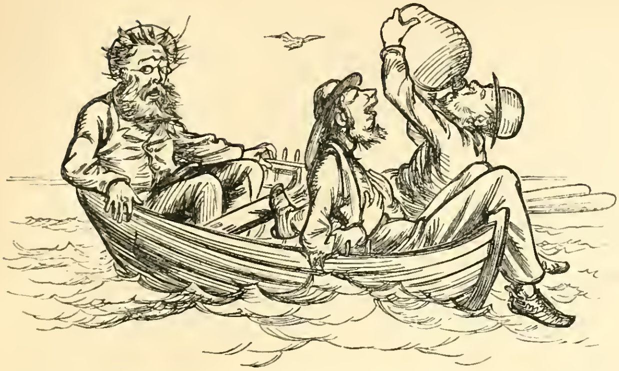


A nibble, by Jingo!

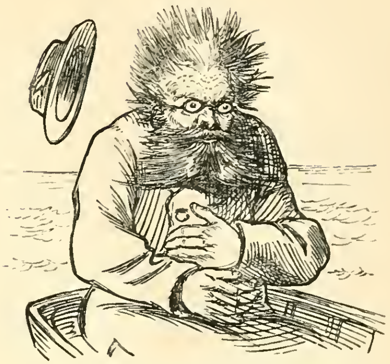


What nibbled—life-size.

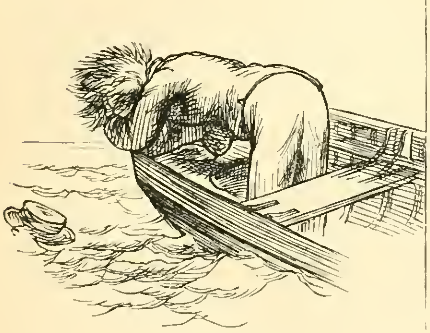
A DAY'S FISHING IN THE SEA.



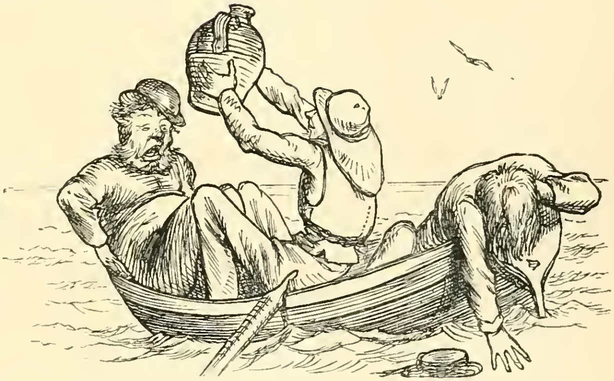
After exertion, refreshment. Although "the rover is free," certain uneasy qualms begin to remind him that he is but mortal.



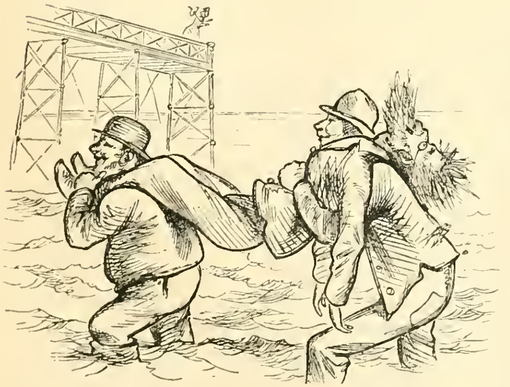
I feel that I have turned white.



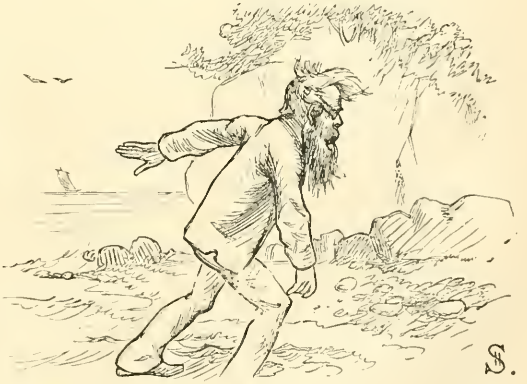
Inside out.



When the stone bottle is expended, and not until then,



Those wretches of boatmen consent to put me on shore—which they do in a manner much more effectual than dignified, right underneath the pier and the eyes of Mary Jane.



I make tracks for home, vowing never more to venture my precious body on the treacherous element!

MAKING A FIGURE.

WHEN I tell you how it came about that Alfred Marquis—that 's his name, bless you—first began to keep company with me, you 'll say: "When confidence was a-being given out, *she* wasn't behind the door." Not as I 'm forward, either, in a general way, but as the poet says—at least, Alfred says he says—there 's a "Providence that shapes our ends;" and as I was always noted at home for a light foot, there seems to have been something in it that I should step into a walk in life that I hadn't sought after.

Little did I think, when I answered that advertisement out of a serious newspaper, whilst I was staying with Aunt Underdone in Berkshire, which is a Dissenter, and so naturally takes it in weekly, that I should be in London and in a place that would be thought worldly by most, and engaged to a real gentleman, mind you, though at present, as he says, in cognetow, which I think is his fun, or else French for lodgings in Camden Town.

"In a quiet family, four in number, and very little company: £12 a year, and all found. Address, Professor, Belmont Hall, Adalbert Gardens, N.W."—that 's how it went. I didn't much like the look of it myself, for I 'm one that can't abear a place where there isn't a little life; but Aunt she was for my writing at once, as I believe because it was signed Professor, for, says she, "Though it ain't always that practice goes with a great profession—and people don't ought always to be talking about it—yet in a paper like this no doubt it has a meaning, and you 'll be none the worse, Arabella, for being with serious professing people."

My reverences was all right, and you might have knocked me down with a feather when I got out at Chalk Farm, and after inquiring for Mr. Bonamies—just imagine what a name, you know!—the porter, which I 'd given him a pint of the same to put my trunk into a cab, said the house was but two streets off, and I might know it by seeing "a big liar" stuck up between the two front windows, and the name underneath.

I thought the feller was intoxicated, of course, and tore off to where the driver pointed with his whip, till I felt somehow he was going wrong, and so I screamed out to a butcher boy as was leaving a neck of mutton at a great white stucco place with a front gate that was wide open, and a garden with a big board on a prop that looked like a house to let, when all of a sudden the cab pulled up, and calls out, curling himself round to the window off the box, "Here you are, what are yer hollerin' at?" Then, sure enough, I looked up at the house, and right in front was a great gilded thing like a harp that you see at the top of penny valentines, as I believe is supposed to be played on by Cupid or something, and on the board that was close to the front railings was Professor Bonamies et Fils, in great gold letters, and underneath *La Danse* on one side and *La Musique* on the other, with practice nights Wensdays and Fridays at 8, select assemblies every Tuesday at 8.30; ladies' classes by Mademoiselle Bonamies; which, thinks I, is a little too much of it even for serious people, in my opinion, and I wonder what they call a little company, though I suppose they don't have a tea-meeting so late as all that comes to.

There was no time to think about it, however; for what with the butcher boy and the cabman, the bell was rung that violent as brought out a little frightened-looking gentleman in his shirt-sleeves, and with no collar on to speak of. He stood on the top step, and his hair, which was very long and light, blowed a'most upright; so that what with that and a very hookey nose, and a little tuft of hair on his chin, he looked like a poll-parrot with the colour washed out, and a fiddle under his wing.

No wonder the bell didn't sound much, for when the door was opened, there was a piano going as though somebody had a reg'lar spite against it, and every now and then a rumbling like a coach and four, and the guard blowing his horn to a tune that trembled all up and down. This is indeed seriousness, thinks I, if it ain't Bedlam; and as I'd paid the cab beforehand, I was just a-going to get back again, but the man he'd drove off and left my trunk in the front garden, and the butcher boy says, "Here, you're the new servant, ain't you? just take this in, then," and puts the neck o' mutton, without a bit of paper, into my best gloves.

"Here, Alphonse! Hi, Mary Ann! somebody, bring a dish," squeals the little gentleman on the steps; and all of a sudden the piano stops, and another little gentleman just like him, only stouter and with his hair dark and all cut short off, comes down, winking like a blackbird in a tail-coat, and with such tiny feet in shiny boots, that I should say he wouldn't take more than women's small fours, not even if he was to be measured for 'em.

"What's the matter, boys?" says another little gentleman in a brown wig, and a shirt front that stuck out of his westcoat. "Kelker lead omidge," he says: "Kesker say voo fair?" and he looks so hard at me with his compliments, that I pretty nigh dropped the neck of mutton.

"Vat is de ladee stand dere for?" he cries out in his broken English.

"All right," says a little lady, so very short that I hadn't seen her till she come from behind a big dish; "it's the new servant."

"Oh, ha! lar domsteek," says the old gentleman. "Then for vy has there been such a precious row, and how came she by the neck of mutton?"

He spoke English all of a sudden just as well as if he'd been a native, and then they all laughed, and the gent in the shirt-sleeves took the mutton, and the other one flew at my box, and tore with it up the steps, in one hand.

"There," he says, "you couldn't have done that!"

"Couldn't I?" says the first one, and down he pops the mutton, and then *he* flies at the trunk and runs right upstairs with it before you could say Jack Robinson. This was the four in family, Mr. Bonamies and Fils — which I afterwards learnt wasn't neither of their names, but that they was Mr. Alphonse, called John for short, and Mr. Frederique, with the *que* cut off, except on paper; Miss Bonamies, mostly called by her nickname of Madamasel, I think must have been Mary Ann, but they called her anything that came uppermost, mostly out of the titles of music, such as Mayflower, or Opopponacks, or Jerroldeen, and such romances as them. For the fact of it was, that this serious family was teachers of dancing and music, and was always at it, morning, noon, and night a'most. The place used to shake with their playing of a morning, and rock with their dancing at night; but this I will say, that a kinder set of little creatures couldn't be, and it was true enough about company. There wasn't anybody come to see 'em once a month, and the grand assembly once a quarter only meant two pounds of ham cut into sandwiches at the shop round the corner, a couple of plates of mixed biscuits, and a jug of lemonade, with one of negus, all set out on a table in the first-floor landing, because of course there was no furniture in the ball-room, except two rout seats and the piano.

I didn't really find out what they was till after we'd made a Irish stew of the neck of mutton, which —would you believe it? — they mostly took their dinners in the kitchen, and picked it up quick, just like so many birds, talking and laughing all the time.

"Perhaps you wouldn't mind cleaning the plate," says Madamasel. She was a pleasant little thing, and as to playing, she was a whole band of music, I should say, and knew every instrument. "Perhaps you wouldn't mind cleaning the plate, as this is our assembly night?"

"Yes, miss," I says, "if you'll please give it me out, and tell me where the plate-brush and the powder is. I suppose it isn't all silver, miss?"

"Why," she says, busting out laughing, "I mean the plate on the street-door. All our knives and forks are in the dresser-drawer."

Wasn't it queer?

Sure enough, when I went up to look, there was a great white metal plate that made the door look as though it had been put into armour, and on the plate was "Bonamies, Professor of Music and Dancing. Private Lessons. Families and Schools attended."

"Well," I says to myself, "this *is* a little serious now. I shall see something new if I stop here, which I much doubt."

And I did, too, as you shall hear.

It was coming on towards Christmas-time—leastways, it had turned the Michaelmas quarter—and that was the reason why there was such a bustle, because, bless you! all the young ladies, and some that wasn't over-young too, was preparing for the parties, and naturally had to get up their dancing beforehand. Private lessons was soon a-going on directly after tea-time; and as the private lessoners was allowed to stop to the practice, and all the practice that chose could pay an extra sixpence for the privilege of coming to the assembly (which they spelt it with a double "e," as was one of their queer ways), the house had a fine time of it, and I often wondered what the parish surveyor was about not to take it up to prevent its tumbling down, as I often thought it would. Everything seemed to dance to music. I scrubbed the stairs to a tune, and made the beds to Weber's last waltz, as I somehow learnt through hearing of it so often set for all sorts of instruments. Madamasel, too, did everything by notes—a lively, little, mild-tempered creature too, she were, and full of her fun; which you'll hardly believe, she must needs give me two or three lessons in dancing in the kitchen. Little did I think what was to come of it.

One day, at dinner (it was liver and bacon), they was all a-laughing and talking as usual, but yet there was a something uncomfortable. I couldn't be off hearing that they had a difficulty as to making up the number as come to their Tuesday evenings, and what was worst was that there was two new pupils—gents that come regular genteel, in white kid gloves and nosegays in their buttonholes; one of 'em a little elderly. It was all very well while the practice was going on, because there was plenty of young girls as come with their Mas, or else was fetched at nine o'clock, as well as a few older; but it wasn't near enough to Christmas for these to spend extra sixpences for the Tuesdays, and so there was a dearth of females on these occasions.

The very next evening, which was a Tuesday, Mr. Alphonse, as was the light-haired one, suddenly come rushing down into the kitchen and asked me for a glass of beer. I drawed it for him, and as he drunk it up quite slow, I could see his pale little blue eye a-glaring at me through the tumbler.

"You've got an uncommonly good figure," he says, quite slow.

He said so just as he might have remarked, "Excuse me, but you've got a black on your nose." They was all like that: they could say things quite innocent, that in other people would have sounded like impidence; so I only laughed.

"Madamasel is coming down to polish you up a bit, and we want you to come upstairs to make up the sets."

"What!" I says; "I don't know of no more than one dinner and one tea set, and a many pieces were broke before I came here, while as to the knives"——

"Nonsense," he says: "you must come and dance; we want more ladies—don't you see? Nobody'll know you if you're made up a bit, and you're Miss Montmorency—don't you see? Here's a pair of my gloves as will about fit you, and as to dress—well, we've seen you go out on Sundays, and—it'll be all right. You keep your eye on me when you're in the room, and you'll come through like a prize canary." And off he went.

I was struck all of a heap, and when Miss came down I was almost speechless. But, bless you, she made reg'lar fun of it, and at last I entered into the thing, which, mind you, when I'd got my best grenadine on, and a nice muslin fissue trimmed with cherry ribbins, as well as a flower in my hair, and a waist ribbin, all of of 'em lent to me by Madamasel, which is a regular good one, I was ready to be introduced, having previous been showed how to go into the room, and bow to Mr. Bonamies, and shake hands with Mr. Alphonse, and shake both hands with Miss herself, and just give the tips of my fingers to Mr. Fredereek, and to bow in general to the company, in haristockracy manner.

Of course I didn't do all this, but I got through something like it, though when I followed Miss to the landing, and waited, as she told me, outside the door for a minute or two, I felt a reg'lar thrill, and turned hot and cold. However, it was all right. There was master bowing and smiling like a clockwork image.

"Ah ha!" he says. "Mees Montmorensee. Dis is a playsea unexpected. Commong foo porty foo?"

"Permit me," says Mr. Alphonse, offering his arm; and before I knowed where I was, I was introduced to a young gent, quite a lad, in a round jacket and pumps.

"Please to take your places for a quadrille," says Mr. Bonamies, and began fiddling away like mad.

Miss was opposite to me, with her partner, and so I got on well enough. Indeed, as we passed backwards and forwards she whispers, "Bravo! you 're a treasure," and laughed quite pleasant. But bless you, I 'd no eyes except for him that stood beside her, and he had no eyes except for me. He *was* elegant that night. All in black, with tail-coat and embroidered silk vest, and a lace tie, and mustachers that made him look the officer.

Is it to be wondered at that I felt all of a flutter when he came up, and with a pensive bow as was most becoming, said, "May I hope, Miss Montmorency, to obtain the honour of your hand—for the next dance?" There was a pause after "hand" as made it *so* expressive that it was like a bit out of the "Family Herald." But why linger thus on the dawn of an affection that was to ripen into the pearl of a mutual love? Enough, that we met and met again, and that between the figures of the dances I had poured into my willing ears the oaths—at least, the vows, for Alfred ain't one to use bad language—Well, I 've got his letters, and they can tell you better than my feeble pen what was the sentiments that first won my heart. Do you think I could have wrote like this but for the times and times I read those dear infusions by the light of the rush when I 'd gone up to bed on Tuesday nights? For I was kept at it till near upon Christmas, and the first of these notes was put inside a booket of flowers that he brought me the second time as ever we met.

It was my being like one of the family that made it easy for me to get leave to go out for half a day, though it wasn 't my regular Monday. It had come to that. Alfred had implored me to answer his last letter, which said, "Give me but the opportunity of pleading my cause where we shall not be remarked by envious or jealous eyes. Say, oh! say you will meet me."

So I said, "Corner of Maitland Park, by the Orphan School, at half-past two on Monday."

This was whispered as we turned partners, and the squeeze of the hand he gave me as we led across nearly made me squeal, because I 'd got a whitlow under my glove, wrapped round with Venus turpentine. Shall I ever forget that afternoon at the tea gardens at Ham'stead Heath? Never! How he declared his undying passion for me, how he would have flung himself at my feet in the arbour, but I pointed out that the floor was fresh painted, so he desisted; how he spoke of Mr. Gimmidge—as was the sunburnt elderly gentleman in a blue coat and white waistcoat that used to sit mostly to watch the dancing, and only occasionally joined in a quadrille. He was jealous of this person, Alfred was; and truth to say, Mr. Gimmidge never seemed to take his eyes off of me, especially when I was dancing with Alfred.

The end of it was, he told me how his relations, especially his mother, had insisted on his taking to a course of life which was unsuitable to him, because of property that was to be his if he pleased a rich uncle, now on his way home from foreign parts to adopt somebody to come into his money.

Wasn't this a romance equal to anything in the penny numbers? Here was the heir to wealth living in solitary lodgings in Camden Town. Here was a humble maid—I won't say of all work—but a young person engaged in household duties, under a disguise that she dared not yet throw off, though her heart was ready to cry out "Take me as I am, Alfred Marquis, or not at all, for I can ne'er deceive thee; no, nor ever will." There was a probable haughty mother in the background; a serious aunt further off in Berkshire; a yaller uncle coming across the seas with gold and pride; and every week there were sweet but candlesting meetings in the mazy dance to two fiddles and a cornet. What would come of it?

I must say I was took down a little off this high horse when next we met alone. The romance was faded a bit, but truth prevailed, and two hearts was made happy, as far as they went. "But more anon," as they say in the play.

It *was* at the play that we met, by appointment. The yaller 'bus put us down at the corner of Long Acre, and we took upper box tickets for Drury Lane. We could whisper there without being heard. The noise would have drowned the laughter of a striped hyæna.

But still we were not happy.

"I must be in solitude with thee," says Alfred, "before I can unfold my secret."

So we went into Covent Garden Market, and there, under the shadow of a waggon-load of cabbages, and amidst the smell of turnips and such-like, I heard his strange story. Would you believe that Alfred Marquis was a exhile from his home becos of his mother's gentility? I certainly thought he was noble, and it gave me at first a rude shock when he said,

"Hear me, adored Miss Montmorency, before you attempt to shatter my hopes for ever. I know you are not indifferent to me. Often have I perused the language of your lovely eyes, and yet we live a mystery to each other; I know not even where you live, and you—you are ignorant that though I am at present lodging in Camden Town, my property—my means of income—my shop, in short, is in the Bagnigge Wells Road."

"Shop, Alfred!" I said, trembling; "and can it be?"

"And no mistake," he said, in a tone that was rather, as I thought, a come-down from his usual sweet poetic style. "But let me speak, and then it is yours to judge.

"I think I have the inkstints of a gentleman," says he. "I 've a third share in a very good business, now managed by my lady mother and my sister; but, in what I fear must be called a evil hour, the serpent stung me—at least I don't mean that, that 's in the 'Lady of Lyons'—what I do mean is, that I heard from my mamma of an uncle of mine that had gone out in the Colonial trade to the West Indies, and had, a month or two ago, said he should by-and-bye come home to die; and that if he found me to be what he expected from my genteel education and bringing up, he should make me his heir. Now, I 'd been taught mostly to look to the shop. My education was—Miss Montmorency, don't avert your face—was commercial. I—look upon me once again—I hated the sort of gentility that my mother had always wanted to put upon me; yet nothing will satisfy her but that I should go forth and learn those graces, as she call 'em, that will put the family stamp upon my name, so that I may present myself before my uncle a finished specimen. Adorable Miss M., I fled from my home. I left a letter to say that in a month of foreign travel I would seek for those refinements which my native land could not afford. I took lodgings in Camden Town—need I say what was awaiting me? At last—at last, I see my error. At last I begin to loathe the shop, since it may keep thee from me—you, the daughter of a noble race, perhaps. Oh that my home were other than in Bagnigge Wells, and that thy name were not Montmorency!"

I was all of a tremble. I thought I could see daylight though. Alfred Marquis was a gentleman in face and in figure, and a third of a shop in the Bagnigge Wells Road, if the business was a good one, would do pretty well, in spite of a genteel mother-in-law. Says I,

"What line 's your shop in, Mr. Marquis?"

"Ah! satirical," says he, in a holler voice; "but no matter. Oil and Italian, with perfumery, potted meats, and a brush trade next door. Would that thy name were not Montmorency!"

I says, "It ain't."

"What!" he cries, seizing me by the hand; "then I am indeed blest! What is it?"

"Arabella Coe," says I, bustin' out crying; and then my heart was that full I told him everything.

Noble, noble Alfred! We went back that night an engaged couple; but we was to keep it secret till he 'd wrote to his mother, and declared that nothing should change him, not if he sold the shop, as he could do under his father's will, or bought his mother and sister out at a vallyation.

* * * * * *

It was the last assemblee before Christmas. There was a great gathering, as Mr. Bonamies called it; and the whitlow on my finger was pretty near well, so I bought a bran new pair of pink kid gloves, frizzetted my hair, took a pair of white kid dancing-boots out of the paper they 'd been sent home in, and when I 'd dressed, presented myself at the kitchen, where all the family was having a snack of something before the company began to arrive.

So up I goes. Alfred was late; not so old Mr. Gimmidge, as was there in a canary vest and a shirt-frill with a diamond brooch, quite handsome, for all his brown face and bald head. They made a good deal of Mr. Gimmidge, becos he was said to be a retired person of property, and a look went round when he comes up to me, and says, "As Mr. Marquis isn't here," he says, "perhaps I may ask the favour of the first quadrille." We stood up, and before we'd got to L'Eté, the old gentleman says, "Has Mr. Marquis made you a honourable offer of marriage, Miss M.?"

You might have knocked me down with a feather. I know I turned pale, for there was Alfred standing at the door a-glowerin' at old Gimmidge dreadful.

"You'd better ask him yourself, sir," with a hysteric laugh; "there he stands."

The old gent was not a bit decomposed.

"Yes, I see him," he says; "but I want to know the rights of this. I've only your interest at heart, believe me—that is, both your interests, but yours first."

This was strange.

"He has," I says, "and more than that I won't tell you."

"More than that I don't want to know at present," says the old feller, and never spoke another word to me till he leads me to a seat.

I'd only a few minutes afterwards to speak to Alfred, for just as I was doing so, Mr. Alphonse he comes up, and says with a bow and a smile,

"Ah, mademoiselle, veel you habe the bounty to come to speak with Miss my sistare?"

I had to go to Miss, which was beckoning me outside the door, where she was talking to Mr. Bonamies.

"Ah, ha! mar share hammy; dis is indeed too joor de great grand playseer, poor fair"—and so he went on cackling till he'd pulled the door to.

"You must get downstairs, and no mistake, Arabella," he says, "for Mrs. Doubledavey, the cow-keeper,'s brought her two daughters, and I'm blest if she isn't going to stay the evening and have a dance, as she says."

"She's upstairs now, taking her things off," says Miss. "I'm quite sorry, Arabella; but, you know, business is business."

"She'll know you for certain," says Master. "One of the girls has been looking you over already. You know you're often there for milk. You can't hide your figure nor yet your face, Miss Montmorency."

"Only a minute," I says; and in I flew to where Alfred was standing all lonely by the window.

"I shall be obliged to go out after you leave to fetch the supper beer, Alfred," I says; "meet me, oh, meet me at the corner of the street; and if you should see your poor Arabella presently in the garb of humility," I says—

"Mademoiselle, charming Mees," says Mr. Bonamies, touching me on the arm, "your friend's awaiting downstairs."

* * * * * *

The company was pretty nigh all gone, and the gas was turned down. Perhaps I ought to say, "the guests was departed; the lights burnt low"—but there's an end of potry for the present. Anyhow, only Mr. Gimmidge and Alfred was left, after they'd seen some of the ladies to their cabs, and they was both having a glass of port wine and a biscuit together, quite friendly like, the family having joined 'em in the same. Alfred had started suddenly when I brought in the decanter; but as I've said, the gas was down—perhaps lowered a purpose—and I were not reckernised by Mr. G.

They was enjoying themselves, as I've stated, when there suddenly came a sound of wheels, and a thundering rat-tat at the door.

"Somebody ordered a cab and forgot it," says Mr. Alphonse, forgetting all about his French, with his mouth full of biscuit.

At that moment I was entering the room, with my knees shaking under me, for well I knew who had come like a whirlwind. But thinks I, Madam, if you ain't a lady, I'll try to be. So I'd asked her into the parlour below, and left a flat candlestick.

"A person wishes particular to see Mr. Marquis," I says, but the person herself was behind me, pushes me a one side, and busts into the room. A tall, vinegar-faced woman, in a fashionable hat and a chignon.

"Yes," she screams, "and I 'm the *person*, and I 'll just ask you, Alfred, whether this is the sort of thing for a mother to see, when you should have been at Boolong, or else Parris itself, and back, as you said, to spend your Christmas. You that 's been deluded by some trolloping gal," she says, "as calls herself Montmorency, does she? and beneath yourself in station, too, eh? but this is what I might expect of your coming to such low haunts as this, where I see even men old enough to know better," and she waves her hand at Mr. Gimmidge, "encourages all sorts of vice."

"Come, I say, madame, vous avez donk" —— says Master.

"What are you jabbering your nonsense at me for?" says she, in a fury.

"Well then, come," says Mr. Fredereek, "I wouldn't be impolite to a lady for all the world," he says, "but this is my sister" (pointing to Madamaselle), "and there 's no vice and no low haunt, nor low females of any kind where she is," he says. "Permit me to hand you to your cab, madam."

"Where 's Miss Montmorency?" says Mr. Gimmidge, all of a sudden, turning up the gas. "Where is that charming young woman?"

"We 're all up the flue now," says Mister Alphonse; but he all of a sudden turns round to me, offers his arm, and laughing, says, "This is Miss Montmorency. She 's a inmate of our family," he says, "and a rose by any other name will smell as sweet, so her real name 's Arabella Coe. She never was introduced as a lady. She 's a pupil."

"She 's a servant—a low, common servant gal," screams Mrs. Marquis; for that Tartar was poor Alfred's mother, as had come to take him home.

Now, Alfred had been talking in a corner to Mr. Gimmidge, as he 'd all of a sudden come to be quite friendly, and when his mother spoke like this, he turns round quite sudden, makes a noble bow to Mr. Alphonse, and takes me by the hand.

"If she will give up her own name, she will honour me by taking mine," he says, and draws my arm under his.

The old lady was going fast into histeraicks.

"I 'll leave it to Mr. Gimmidge to decide whether I am right," says he.

"What, that person there!" she screams. "Alfred Marquis, I disown you. Your blessed uncle shall never be misled by me." And she fell into a chair.

Mr. Gimmidge's conduct was strange. He walked up to Mrs. Marquis, lifted her bodily, chair and all, under the gaslight, and then standing straight in front of her, says,

"Do you mean to say, Eliza, that I 've altered so as you don't know me? Miss Montmorency ain't the only one as has an aleyus," he says, laughing. "My name 's not Gimmidge, but Parkins, and if this lady doesn't remember her brother by his face, he remembers her by her temper."

"You, then, are my uncle, sir?" said Alfred, as steady as a rock, and holding me tight by the arm.

"I am, sir," said the old gentleman, looking at him quite straight; "and as you 've been good enough to tell me, as a stranger, something of your goings on here, I 'd like to ask whether you still mean to pursue the course as you 've marked out? Come, sir, just answer."

"Ah!" screeched Mrs. Marquis, "that 's a dear good brother—you 're his uncle, you know. Now then, answer. Do you mean to marry this girl and live on the shop?"

"I mean to marry this girl, certainly," says my Alfred; "and I 'd do it—without offence—if twenty uncles stood in the way. You think I might be a gentleman if I didn't—I know I shouldn't be a man unless I did."

Down came the old gent's hand upon Alfred's shoulder. I thought at first he was going to strike him, but he only roared out,

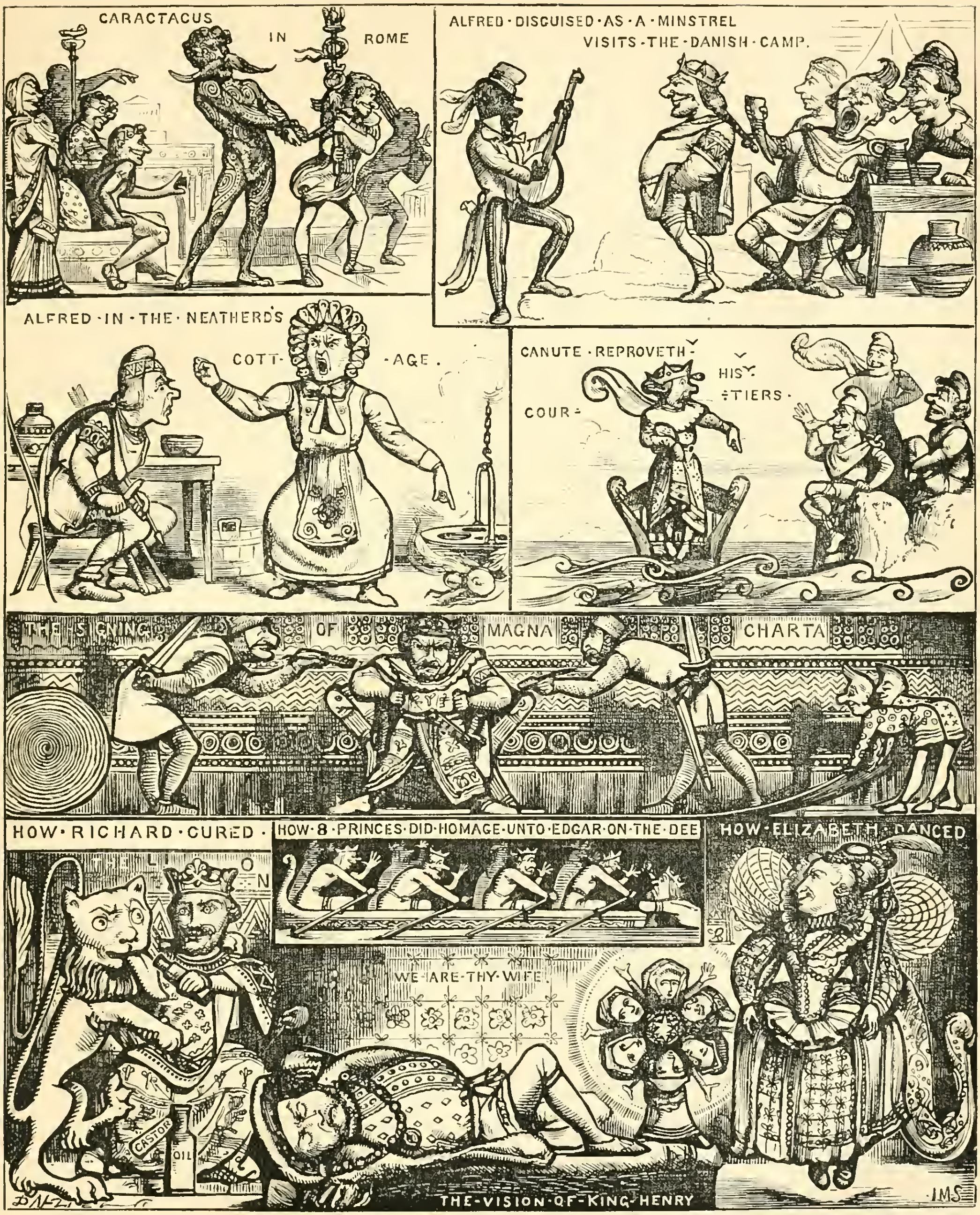
"And I 'll be hanged if you shan't, too; at any rate, I 've learnt enough to dance at your wedding. Boy, I 'm proud of you—confound the gentility that needs to keep up a sham with a lie!" And all of a sudden—it give me such a turn—he kisses me right on the cheek, and puts my hand into Alfred's.

Then in a minute, just as if they 'd been hired to do it, and not impromptwo—or at least three—the family bust out with such a roar of music, fiddle, cornet, and pianoforte, as drownded even Mrs. Marquis's sobs.

Wasn't it romantic?

T. A.

ENGLISH HISTORY IN A NEW LIGHT.


CARACTACUS IN ROME
ALFRED·DISGUISED·AS·A·MINSTREL VISITS·THE·DANISH·CAMP.
ALFRED·IN·THE·NEATHERD'S COTT-AGE.
CANUTE·REPROVETH·HIS·COUR-TIERS·
THE·SIGNING OF MAGNA CHARTA
HOW·RICHARD·CURED·THE·LION
HOW·8·PRINCES·DID·HOMAGE·UNTO·EDGAR·ON·THE·DEE
HOW·ELIZABETH·DANCED
WE·ARE·THY·WIFE
CASTOR OIL
THE·VISION·OF·KING·HENRY
IMS

THE PILOT'S STORY.

YOU ask for the "City of London," sir:—
Do you see that tug there?—that is her!
And Kingston, the master—I 'm the man,
And you want me to speak o' the wreck, as I can?

I 've little to say, sir, yet what I know
Of the "Northfleet's" loss and that night of woe,
I will give it to you in my own rough way,
Though sailors can *do* much better than *say.*

We had just brought up where the pilots lie,
As the stinging sleet went driving by;
And hard after that came a hazy rain;
The stars had been out, but were in again;

When we saw a big blaze off Dungeness,
A look—and we knew that it meant distress.
"Up with her anchor, my lads," cried I,
As a shower of rockets burst in the sky.

And steering away where some fires burn'd blue,
The luckless vessel soon hove in view,
As her riding-light in the foremast shroud
Was sinking, so "Ship ahoy!" aloud

I shouted: I saw she was going down,
And knew that many a one must drown,
For souls by hundreds were struggling there
In all the agony of despair.

In less than the time I 've been talking to you
We were all among them. Says I to my crew,
"For God's sake, into the boat! be brave,
And see how many, lads, you can save."

For a moment I lost my head and legs,
Since they crowded around me as thick as eggs.
"Hold hard!" I thunder'd, "and let her drive,"
For the sea with the drowning was all alive.

Well, we pick'd up thirty-four; but hold—
No, thirty-eight, if the truth is told;
For their boat that was sinking beneath my view
Had four of my own good sturdy crew.

That poor little thing, the Cap'n's wife,—
I 'm happy to say I sav'd her life,
And huddled her into my berth below:
Says she, "Is my husband alive or no?"

I answer'd, with look as hard as steel,
"Gone off in a lugger, and safe at Deal."
May God forgive me for telling the lie,
But what could I say? so that said I.

And then she pray'd as a woman, sir, will,
That I through the night would keep a watch still;
I promis'd, and did, though a mad chopping sea
Oft threatened to make a shark's meal o' me.

And what did we see at the peep o' the day
But the three mast-tops sticking up in the bay?
When we very soon made us a hasty flight,
To save the poor wretches the pain of the sight.

To finish my tale, and to cut it short,
We put on all steam and got into port:
"Is the Cap'n all right?" and the answer came, "No"—
That was a regular knock-down blow.

And I blubbered just like a silly child,
For the poor little young thing I knew was wild.
"You are wanted," some one said, "below;
The skipper's wife"—but I dare not go.

For she, poor broken-hearted soul,
Her sorrow was quite beyond control;
She would neither bite a bit nor sup,
Though I got some tea and made her a cup,—

Made her a cup with these very same hands.
Ay, a loss like o' that, sir, who understands?
But if ever again we meet together,
I hope it will be in better weather.

You 've heard what the bos'n and Pilcher said,
And seen how Jack Stanley went off to their aid,
When the Spaniards who sank them had left them to die,
With never a speck of a star in the sky.

Curse the lubbers! I say; and, egad!
If I 'd got them here, I 'd hang them, my lad;
I 'd string them all up from stern to stem,
And make a jolly quick end o' them.

Hear poor Cap'n Knowles—pray pardon the tear—
"Save the women and children: *my* duty is here."
"A Briton," you say: you 'd have done the same:
It is easy to die if you are but game.

Good skippers think nought of themselves, sir, when
They 're sinking with children, women and men;
And the "Northfleet's"—God bless him for losing his life—
Had only been married six weeks to his wife.

'T is well for the lubber the coast was clear,
And no British thunderer chanced to be near,
Or a shot would have made her move more slow,
Or sent her down to her place below.

I 'm ashamed, I say, sir, to pipe my eye,
But the heavens were rent with their drowning cry;
And English sailors, though rough we may be,
Have the old true stuff of humanity.

I have little to tell, as I said before;
I have done a man's duty, and nothing more;
The help that we lent them, alas! was small,
But I would to God we had rescued them all.

EDWARD CAPERN.

CURRIED COW.

MY Aunt Patience, who tilled a small farm in Badger County, State of Michigan, had a favourite cow. She was not a good cow, nor a profitable one, because, instead of employing a part of her leisure in the secretion of milk and the production of veal, she concentrated all her faculties upon the study of kicking. In that business she embarked her entire intellectual and muscular capital. She would kick all day, and get up in the dead waste and middle of the night to kick. She would kick anything—hens, pigs, gate-posts, loose stones, birds in the air, and fish jumping out of the water; all were equal in the sight of this impartial beef—all similarly deserving of a lift heavenward. I have often thought that when Dryden wrote of some one who "raised a mortal to the skies," he had my aunt's cow in his prophetic soul, for she was always doing it, more or less. It was a choice delight to see her open a passage for herself through a populous barn-yard. She would flash out right and left, first with one hind-foot and then with the other, and would sometimes have a large and select assortment of domestic animals in the air at one time.

Her kicks, too, were as admirable in quality as inexhaustible in quantity. They were unspeakably superior to those of the untutored kine who had not made the art a life study — mere amateurs, who kicked "by ear," as they say in music. I saw her once standing in the road, professedly fast asleep, and mechanically munching her cud with a sort of Sunday morning lassitude, as one munches one's cud in a dream. Snouting about at her side, blissfully unconscious of impending danger, and wrapped up in thoughts of his sweetheart, was a gigantic black hog—a hog of about the size and general appearance of a rhinoceros. Suddenly, while I looked—without a visible movement on the part of the cow—with never a perceptible tremor of her frame, nor a lapse in the placid regularity of her chewing—that hog had gone away from there—had utterly taken his leave. But away toward the pale horizon a minute black speck was traversing the empyrean with the speed of a meteor, and in a moment had disappeared, without audible report, beyond the distant hills. That is the kind of cow she was.

Currying cows is not, I think, a common practice, even in Michigan; but as this one had never needed milking, of course she had to be subjected to some equivalent form of persecution; and irritating her skin with a currycomb was thought as disagreeable an attention as a thoughtful affection could devise. At least she thought it so; though I suspect her mistress really meant it for the good creature's temporal advantage. Anyhow my aunt always made it a condition to the employment of a farm-servant that he should curry the cow every morning; but after just enough trials to convince himself that it was not a sudden spasm, nor a mere local disturbance, the man would always give notice of an intention to quit, by pounding the beast half-dead with some foreign body, and then limping home to his couch. I don't know how many men the creature removed from my aunt's employ in this way, but judging from the quantity of lame persons in that part of the country, I should say a good many; though some of the lameness may have been taken at second-hand from the original sufferers by their descendants, and some may have come by contagion.

I think my aunt's was a faulty system of agriculture. It is true her farm labour cost her nothing, for the labourers all left her service before any salary had accrued; but as the cow's fame spread abroad through the several States and Territories, it became increasingly difficult to obtain hands; and, after all, the favourite was but imperfectly curried. It was currently remarked that that cow had kicked the farm to pieces—a rude metaphor, implying that the land was not properly cultivated, nor the buildings and fences kept in adequate repair. It was useless to remonstrate with my aunt: she would concede everything, amending nothing. Her late husband had attempted to reform the abuse in this manner, and had had the argument all his own way until he had remonstrated himself into an early grave; and the funeral was delayed more than an hour, until a fresh undertaker could be procured, the one originally engaged having confidingly undertaken to curry the cow at the request of the widow.

Since that time my Aunt Patience had not been in the matrimonial market; the love of that cow had usurped in her heart the place of a more natural and profitable affection. But when she saw her seeds unsown, her harvests ungarnered, her fences overtopped with rank brambles, and her meadows gorgeous with the towering Canada thistle, she thought it best to take a partner.

When it transpired that my Aunt Patience intended wedlock, there was intense popular excitement. Every adult single male became at once a marrying man. The criminal statistics of Badger County show that in that single year more marriages occurred than in any decade before or since. But none of them were my aunt's. Men married their cooks, their laundresses, their deceased wives' mothers, their sisters—married whomsoever would wed; and any man who, by fair means or courtship, could not obtain a wife, went before a justice of the peace, and made an affidavit that he had some wives in Indiana. Such is the force of example in Badger County.

Now, where my Aunt Patience's affection was concerned she was, as the reader will have already surmised, a rather determined woman; and the extraordinary marrying epidemic having left but one eligible male in all that county, she set her heart upon that one eligible male, then went and carted him to her home. He turned out to be a long

Methodist parson, named Huggins I believe, though I have had a multitude of uncles in my time, and never a discriminating memory. Aside from his unconscionable length, the Rev. Berosus Huggins was not so bad a fellow, and was nobody's fool. He was, I suppose, the most ill-favoured mortal, however, in the whole northern half of America—thin, angular, cadaverous of visage, and solemn out of all reason. He commonly wore a low-crowned black hat, set so far down upon his head as to partially eclipse his eyes and wholly obscure the ample glory of his ears. The only other visible article of his attire (except a brace of wrinkled cowskin boots, by which the word "polish" would have been considered the meaningless fragment of a lost language) was a tight-fitting black frock-coat, preternaturally long in the waist, and the skirts of which fell about his heels, sopping up the dew. This he always wore snugly buttoned from the throat downward. In this attire he cut a tolerably spectral figure. His aspect was so conspicuously unnatural and inhuman that whenever he went into a corn-field, the predatory crows would temporarily forsake their business to settle upon him in swarms, fighting for the best seats about his person, by way of testifying their contempt for the shallow devices of the husbandman.

The day after the wedding my Aunt Patience summoned the Rev. Berosus to the council-chamber, and uttered her mind to the following intent:

"Now, Huggy, dear, I'll tell you what there is to do about the place. First, you must repair all the fences, clearing out the weeds and repressing the brambles with a strong hand. Then you will have to exterminate the Canada thistles, mend the waggon, rig up a plough or two, and get things into ship-shape generally. This will keep you out of mischief for the better part of two years; of course you will have to give up preaching, for the present. As soon as you have —— Oh! I forgot poor Phœbe. She"——

"Mrs. Huggins," interrupted her solemn spouse, "I shall hope to be the means, under Providence, of effecting all needful reforms in the husbandry of this farm. But the sister you mention (I trust she is not of the world's people)—have I the pleasure of knowing her? The name, indeed, sounds familiar, but"——

"Not know Phœbe!" cried my aunt, with unfeigned astonishment; "I thought everybody in Badger knew Phœbe. Why, you will have to scratch her legs every blessed morning of your natural life!"

"I assure you, madam," rejoined the Rev. Berosus, with dignity, "it would afford me a sacred pleasure to administer to the spiritual needs of sister Phœbe, to the extent of my feeble and unworthy ability; but, really, I fear the merely secular ministration of which you speak must be entrusted to abler, and, I would respectfully suggest, feminine hands."

"Whyyy, youuu, ooold, foooool!" replied my aunt, spreading her eyes with unbounded amazement, "Phœbe is a *cow!*"

"In that case," said the husband, with unruffled composure, "it will, of course, devolve upon me to see that her carnal welfare is properly attended to; and I shall be happy to bestow upon her legs such time as I may, without sin, snatch from my strife with Satan and the Canada thistles."

With that the Rev. Mr. Huggins crowded his hat upon his shoulders, pronounced a brief benediction upon his bride, and betook himself to the barn-yard.

Now, it is necessary to explain that he had known perfectly well, from the first, who Phœbe was, and was familiar, from hearsay, with all her sinful traits. Moreover, he had already done himself the honour of paying her a visit, remaining in the vicinity of her person, just out of range, for more than an hour, and permitting her to survey him at her leisure from every point of the compass. In short, he and Phœbe had mutually reconnoitered and prepared for action.

Amongst the articles of comfort and luxury which went to make up the good parson's *dot*, and which his wife had already caused to be conveyed to his new home, was a patent cast-iron pump, about seven feet high. This had been deposited near the barn-yard, preparatory to being set up on the planks above the barn-yard well. Mr. Huggins now sought out this invention, and, conveying it to its destination, put it into position, screwing it firmly to the planks. He next divested himself of his long gaberdine and his hat, buttoning the former loosely about the pump, which it almost concealed, and hanging the latter upon the summit. The handle of the pump, when depressed, curled outward between the skirts of the coat, singularly like a tail; but, with this trifling exception, any unprejudiced observer would have pronounced the thing Mr. Huggins, looking uncommonly well.

These preliminaries completed, the good man carefully closed the gate of the barn-yard, knowing that as soon as Phœbe, who was campaigning in the kitchen garden, should note the precaution, she would come and jump in to frustrate it—which she eventually did. Her master, meanwhile, had laid himself, coatless and hatless, along the outside of the close board fence, where he put in the time catching his death of cold, and peering through a knot-hole.

At first, and for some time, the animal affected not to see the figure on the platform. Indeed, she turned her back upon it directly she arrived, heaved up her cud, and pretended to go to sleep over it. Finding that this stratagem did not achieve its usual success, she abandoned it, and stood for some moments irresolute. Then she began nosing along the ground, as if wholly absorbed in a search for something she had lost, backing about hither and thither, but drawing all the time insensibly nearer to the object of her wicked intention. Arrived within speaking distance, she stood a few moments confronting the fraudful figure; then protruded her nose to be caressed, trying to create the impression that fondling and dalliance were prime necessities to her existence—that she had been accustomed to them all her life, and could not get on without them. Then she approached a little nearer, as if to shake hands, all the while maintaining the most amiable expression of countenance, and executing all manner of seductive nods, and winks, and smiles. Finding these endearments ineffectual, she wheeled suddenly about, and, with the rapidity of lightning, dealt out a terrible kick—a kick that sounded like a stroke of paralysis upon an anvil!

The effect was magical! cows kick, not backward, but sidewise, and the impact which was intended to project the counterfeit parson into the middle of the next Conference week, reacted upon the animal herself; and it and the pain together set her spinning like a top. Such was the velocity of her revolution, that she looked like a vague circular cow, surrounded by a continuous ring, like that of the planet Saturn, which ring was the white tuft at the extremity of her sweeping tail. Presently, as the sustaining centrifugal force was expended, she began to sway and wabble from side to side, and finally toppled over upon her side, rolled convulsively upon her back, and lay motionless with her feet in the air, honestly believing the world had somehow got atop of her and she was supporting it at a great sacrifice of personal comfort. Then she struggled up, somehow, stood waveringly upon three legs, stared blankly about her, rubbed her eyes, and was quite bewildered as to the points of the compass. Perceiving the iron clergyman standing fast by his faith, she threw upon him a look of grieved reproach, and hobbled heart-broken into her humble shed, a subjugated kine.

For several weeks Phœbe's right hind-leg was swollen to a monstrous growth, but by a season of judicious nursing, she was "brought round all right," as my aunt phrased it, or "made whole," as the Rev. Mr. Huggins preferred to say. She was now as tractable and inoffensive "in her daily walk and conversation" (Huggins) as a little boy. Her master used to take her leg trustfully into his lap, and might have taken it into his mouth, for that matter. Her whole nature was radically changed—so altered that one day my Aunt Patience, who, fondly as she loved her, had never before so much as ventured to touch the hem of her garment, as it were, went confidently up to her to soothe her with a pan of turnips. Gad! how thinly she spread out that woman upon the face of a distant stone wall! You could not have done it so evenly with a trowel.

DOD GRILE.

* * *

"THAT DANGEROUS FELLOW, SHIMMEN."

As Described by Adolphus Brown.

TWELVE years ago, when Mrs. B.
Was most unmarriedest of women,
A deal of pain was given me
By that most "dangerous fellow, Shimmen."
He was, at picnic, race, or ball,
Of her admirers most attentive;
I needed—though I hated all—
To kill *him*, but a slight incentive.

His was a genius ne'er at fault:
At picnics he was apt and handy;
Was always ready with the salt,
And had a corkscrew for the brandy.
He kept the kettle on the boil,
He made the tea, he played the fiddle.
I own, what pleasure in such toil
He found, to me is still a riddle.

The mothers looked on him with fear,
The daughters with a wise affection;
He'd but a hundred pounds a year,
And that they felt was their protection.
But Mrs. B.—then Julia Hart—
Had wealth enough for both, and plenty;
And he was handsome, clever, smart,
And she was young, and slim, and twenty.

I felt I must be prompt, perforce,
So underneath a spreading chestnut
('T was of the species known as "horse,"
The Spanish is, I think, the best nut)
I told my love, and won her hand;
I said I loved her best of women,
But added, she must understand
That this must be the last of Shimmen.

* * * * * * * *

Old Shimmen dines with us to-day;
I think he's something in the City;
He doesn't draw excessive pay,
And isn't prudent—more's the pity.
My Charlie, who is nearly ten,
And Maggie, with her tresses yellow,
Combine to vow the best of men
Is Shimmen, that most "dangerous fellow."

He shows them romps, he brings them toys;
They say he is so kind and clever;
Not women now, but girls and boys,
Must find him dangerous as ever.
We dine and smoke, or sip our port;
He's now, in fact, my greatest crony;
Although he'll cut our talking short
To chat with Mag about her pony.

* * * * * * * *

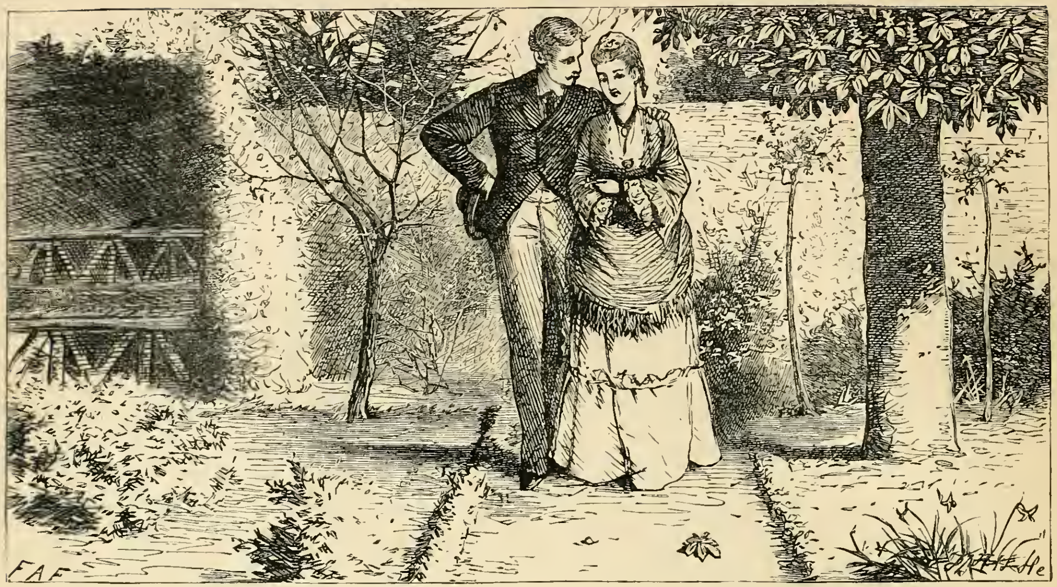
And Mrs. B? Well, I incline
To think Love's fetters *will* grow rusty;
Her temper shows like good old wine—
An inclination to get crusty.
She isn't young—she's stout and red,
She says she'd "rather not be thinner!
Why will I dine at home, instead
Of going to the Club to dinner?"

* * * * * * * *

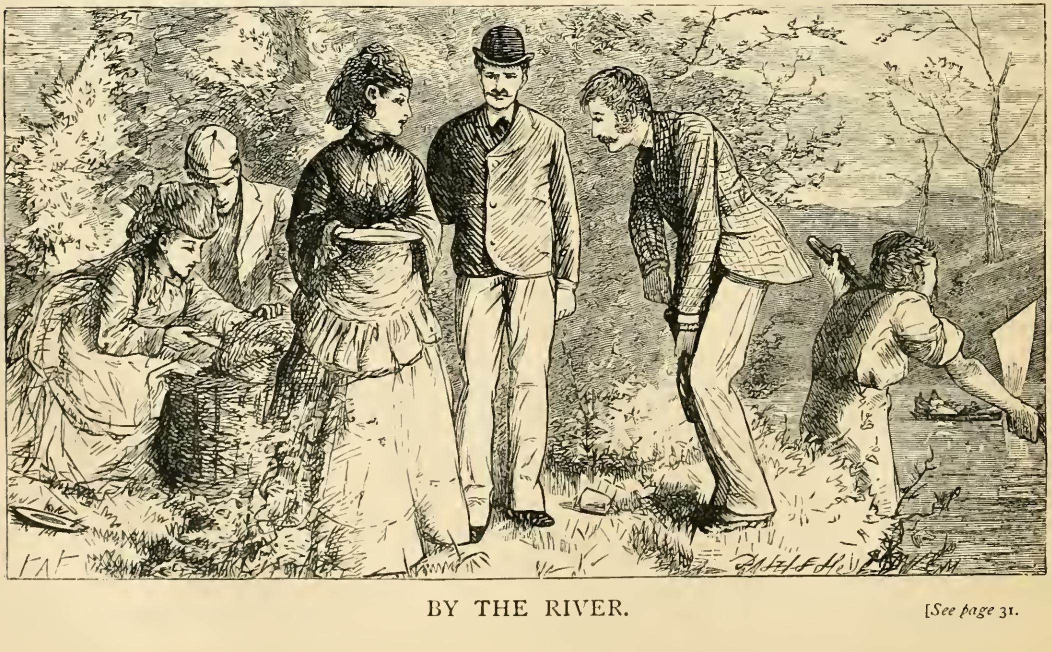
Ah, well! the Club is best, perhaps—
Its *chef* and cellar both are pleasant;
And one can muse upon the gaps
That separate the past and present.
Give that decanter there a shove,
But fill your own glass first, old Shimmen;
Who was it spoke about a love—
A love that passed the love of women?

H. T.

"That dangerous fellow, Shimmen."



IN THE GARDEN.

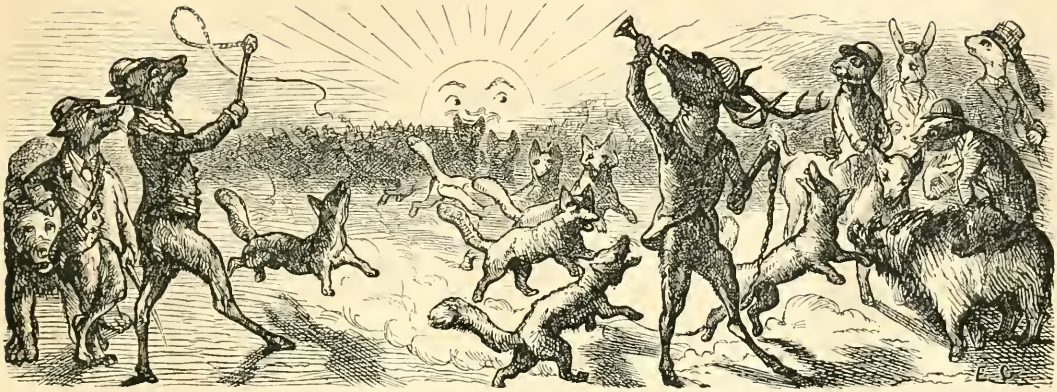


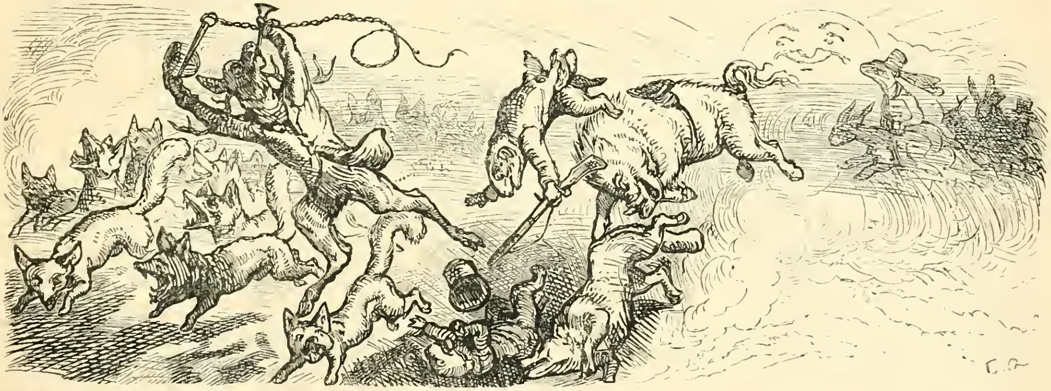
BY THE RIVER.

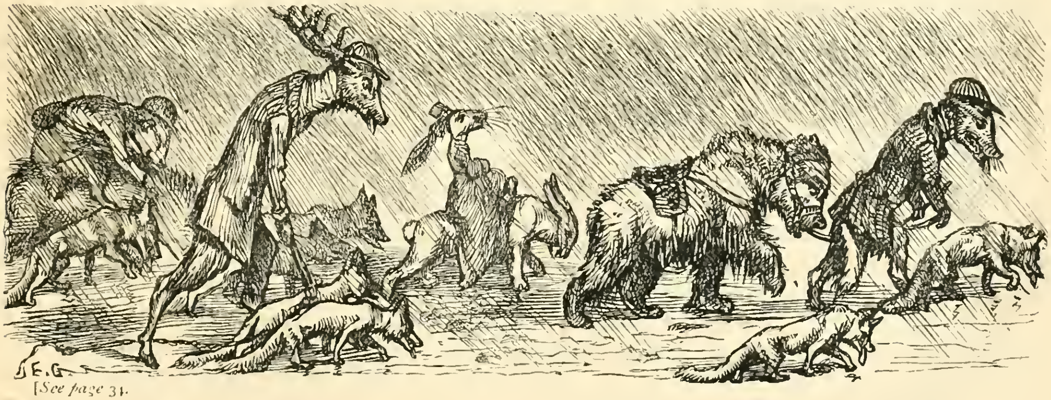
[See page 31.

HUNTING.

FROM A NEW POINT OF VIEW.







[See page 31.

A HUNTING SONG.

From a New Point of View.

HUNTING is a gallant sport,—
Blow the horn! Blow the horn!
Hither huntsmen all resort,
'T is our hunting morn!
Rouse the fox from out his lair,
Frighten from her form the hare,
Give the timid deer a scare,—
'T is our hunting morn!

Harkaway! and Tallyho!
Sound the horn! Sound the horn!
Hounds may tire, and horses blow,—
'T is our hunting morn!
Meaner animals are they,
But intended to purvey
Sport for man, who holds the sway,—
'T is our hunting morn!

But, suppose the tables turned,—
Wind the horn! Wind the horn!
Would the pleasure be discerned,
On a hunting morn,
If the fox the huntsmen chased,
If the deer the deerhound traced,
If the hare the harriers raced,
On a hunting morn?

◆

MY PROTECTOR JEDEDIAH.

IT was not in Fr'isco, nor, indeed, anywhere on the Pacific Slope, that I first met Jedediah Jodson. He and I did not collide for the first time in Far Cathay, or among the Ural Mountains. The first time we encountered was not on an uninhabited island in the South Atlantic. We did not come across each other in the beginning of our acquaintaince in the Upas Valley of Java, or on the green ice of Nova Zembla. Indeed, we never met at all.

But Jedediah and I have been very intimate for all that. J. J. has taken spiritual charge of me, as I am informed by those who know more about the matter than I, who am most immediately concerned, ever professed to do. J. J. has devoted himself to my interests, spiritual and material. He sends me messages continually; he writes to me now and then; he knows a heap of things about me that I do not know myself, though he is curiously ignorant of every single incident of my real life. But still he keeps on concerning himself for me; and he always communicates to me through Miss Anna Maria Webster Flibberty or Mr. David Cox Jones, who are really very superior people of their kind; while now and again, when they are both present, and before the gas is lit of an evening, he passes his soft warm hand over my hair, or gently pats my forehead, or plays a practical joke by sticking a pin into a peculiarly tender portion of my calf, for my friend Jedediah likes his little bit of fun. Why J. J. should take so much interest in me is more than I have ever been able to guess; but there is some good reason for this and all other inexplicable things, no doubt. When Jedediah was mortal, he carried on the business of bar-tender in the Columbia Hotel, Cinnabar City, in the State of Nevada, U.S.A. I never was in the Columbia Hotel, for I was never in Cinnabar City, and how J. J. came to know of my humble existence is beyond me. It is very mysterious, Jones says, and Anna Maria says it is more than mysterious, and I opine that it is passing strange. But there is the fact, for Jones and Anna Maria say so, and if they don't know, how should I, who am not a medium? Up till the present moment J. J. does not seem to have done much for me. He has never given me the correct tip for the Derby, or told me when Great Northern A Stock is going to rise eight per cent. in a day. He is always going on about what he is going to do for my good, but, upon my word, I wish he would begin to let me know of some good accomplished. Even a dozen of Roederer, or a case of Jamison's whisky, would be better than nothing; but J. J. is a teetotaller now, and thinks I should become a Good Templar, which is the more curious that he departed this life in a fit of D.T., so Anna Maria hints. J. J. does not condescend to offer any reason for having pitched upon me as a person to be protected, and he does not appear to have been even my maternal aunt's husband's second cousin in the flesh, for that might give him some claim to interfere in my affairs, if we may judge by the doings of relatives generally. All the satisfaction I get from Jones and Anna Maria is that it has been so ordained. Very well; but what for? They say we shall know in time, and I must wait.

I wait.

I waited.

Yes, waited till last Christmas Eve as ever was, and then Jones and Miss Flibberty called upon me, and explained that J. J. was in great form that night, and wanted to talk to me. He wouldn't talk in the gaslight—that must be extinguished. He would not converse until there had been a jug of water poured on the fire, to keep the flames down. Nor would he open his mind until the curtains were drawn aside, and the glimmer of the gas-lamps in the street was allowed to furnish a sort of second-hand illumination of my parlour. Then J. J. became communicative, and we had quite a good time of it for a few minutes.

Jedediah opened the ball by knocking on the table, and then by scrawling on a piece of paper that he was very fond of me, and all he wanted was to do me good. My banking account was in danger. I wondered at this, too, for up till that moment I was not aware I had got one. Yes, when the bank came to make up its books at the beginning of the new year, it would find that it was hopelessly involved, and would then stop payment. I thought to myself that I didn't care. J. J. went on to observe that I must find a better investment for my money. I fancied its best investment would be to pay my landlady's little account for ground-floor lodgings, as far as the capital would run to it, and J. J. then informed me that he was instructed to order me to assume the proprietorship of "The Medium's Mentor, and Gazette of the Faithful Few." I had no objection, if it would add anything to my income. It would do that largely, said J. J. Would I consent? Certainly I would. Would I mind registering my consent on a document which J. J. had directed to be prepared? Unquestionably I would have no objection. J. J. wished that Jones should be the editor of the organ, at a salary of five hundred a year, paid quarterly in advance. I knew no one so fit for the post. J. J. stipulated that the leading principle of the thing should be the advocacy of Miss Flibberty's claim to be the first of media. Friendship alone and the interests of truth would suffice to ensure attention to Jedediah's wishes on that point, I observed. "The Medium's Mentor" was to come out, I must remember, on the 1st of January. I saw no reason why it should not. Very well then. J. J. would look after me more than ever, for he could see I was thankful for the care he had already bestowed on me. And now he had another message to deliver in Cinnabar City, in five minutes' time, and must say good bye for the present. I was nothing loth, and hoped his rapid journey would not fatigue him. Then he passed his hand over my hair, and passed himself into the better and brighter sphere of his activity, and we breathed again.

More, we lit the gas, and stirred up the fire, and drew close the curtains, and ordered up some tea, and proceeded to discuss the wondrous revelation we had just received through the mouth of Anna Maria. And when she and Jones rose to depart, I said that they seemed to have forgotten the document

Jedediah had ordered to be prepared. How curious, to be sure, that we should all have forgotten the most remarkable part of all till now, they said. I thought it was. Would I sign it at once, they wanted to know, as it really was so very late, and they were sure J. J. had looked after my interests in the matter. But I insisted on reading it, and then I signed it, and they went.

What I had bound myself to do was, to draw all the money lying to my credit at the bank of Messrs. Snoozleum & Specklate, and pay it into the Bank of Progress, to the account of the "Medium's Mentor," to be drawn upon for the purposes of the paper equally by Jones and Anna Maria. I further bound myself to do all I could to push the paper among my friends, and I was not to touch any money until the cost of the paper and Jones's salary as editor were paid; and then all the rest of the profits, anticipated at two thousand pounds per annum, were to be mine—mine own!

On the 1st of January the "Medium's Mentor" came out, and the printer's bill came in. In the afternoon Jones came to me in a state of great anxiety. Why had not I paid in the capital, as agreed on? He had been to the Bank of Progress, and they had no such account. He had been to the old-fashioned house of Messrs. Snoozleum & Specklate, and they had no orders to transfer the amount of my balance. (It would have been strange if they had!) Did I not mean to keep to my contract—because the law must . . .? Certainly I did. Why did I not transfer my balance, then, as agreed upon? You should have seen Jones's face when I replied,

"BECAUSE I HAVE NO BALANCE TO TRANSFER!"

Would I go, he at length entreated me, to the banking-house of Snoozleum? With pleasure. There he demanded if they did not keep an account for me. The cashier said they did not. But this was Mr. Barnabas Bloater, was it not? The clerk thought not, and wanted to know if I was. I answered that I had always believed my name to be thusly. But the cashier averred that, while I was tall and dark, Mr. Barnabas Bloater, who kept the account at Snoozleum's, was podgy and fair.

"That," said I, "is my cousin."

"Then there are two Barnabas Bloaters!"

"There are," said I. "Perhaps three, or thirty."

"This shall not end here," he yelled.

"No," quoth I; "Tom Hood shall have the story for his next ANNUAL."

"You dare!" he screeched.

And I have dared accordingly.

The second number of the "Medium's Mentor" did not appear.

Mr. Jones is now instructing the population of Massachusetts in spiritual mysteries, accompanied by a famous female medium, whom he sometimes in his softer moments calls Anna Maria, but who, it is reported in aristocratic village circles in the State, is none other than the Lady Celestina Brabazon, of the first families of England, who has, however, been so smitten with Republican principles that she drops the courtesy title, though she is still proud to bear the old family name.

But Jedediah Jodson has not been near me since Christmas Eve, and I am really afraid that I may have done something to displease him. I hope not, for the man who would hurt the feelings of a spirit like J. J., would be unworthy of the name of Bloater.

CHARLES WILLIAMS.

◆

THE CORN-CUTTER'S STORY.

MY sojourn at Tunbridge Wells had been a failure, for the town—so far as my profession is concerned—was in the possession of a horrible, fluent, vagabond quack of a Pole; and therefore, on a certain lovely June morning, I took a farewell walk through Hurst Wood, faint at heart, but still rejoicing mightily in the sylvan beauty around me.

Across the brook which is the playfellow of Hurst Wood, there is a little bridge, on which one can rest quite pleasantly, and think deeply about nothing, without any harm to any one. Now, on the morning on which I speak, I had done this for some time, when a fine, intellectual-looking man came up, and seating himself on the bridge, as far from me as its narrow span would allow, uttered a succession of half-smothered groans.

"Is it the loss of some loved relative?" I said to myself; "or has he lost all his wealth through some unfortunate speculation?"

I was really curious to know what was the cause of his grief, and I was not left long in doubt.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, in deep sepulchral tones, which nearly made my limp hair stand on end; "Oh that I could have all the accursed boot-makers and corn-cutters in my grasp at this moment, that I might crush them! What to me are the millions I possess, if I cannot get a pair of boots made to fit me, or procure some ease from my corns?"

And here he gave a species of fiendish yell.

I am under five feet in height; I don't measure more than twenty-six inches round the chest, and couldn't carry a quarter of a hundredweight a quarter of a mile, to save my life. But I am brave; oh, yes, I am brave! So, when I heard the stranger make scurrilous remarks about "corn-cutters," I arose to my full height, and addressed him thus:

"Sir," I said, "observe yon tree-creeper! note how the wee bird taps with its bill here and again, seeking food for its young, and then hurries on, passing by places which, to *our* eyes, would seem most fruitful of larvæ. And why does it do this? *Because it understands its business!* And *I* understand *mine*, sir; and according to the pre-ordained nature of all things, I, being a corn-cutter, am here at the right moment to relieve you of your troublesome corn. Allow me to take off your boot."

Without waiting for any reply, I at once seized the right leg of the stranger, and divested it of its boot and sock, feeling pretty sure that he would be grateful, at any rate, for the relief thus temporarily afforded.

"And taking it for granted," said the great man, with a look of amusement and astonishment, "that you are a *corn-cutter*, what is to persuade me that you will be more successful in my case than all the wretches who have hitherto operated on me?"

"I can perceive, sir," I replied, "that you are a man capable of great self-control, and therefore it is that I am certain, if you will permit me, that I can effect a radical cure of your corn, if you will only, for one minute, obey my injunctions."

"And what am I to do?" said the great man.

"Think of something," said I, "that has been extremely painful or intensely pleasurable in your past life."

A deadly pallor came over the great man's countenance as I uttered the first words, and I knew that my moment had come. I extracted the corn, and held it forth in triumph.

Whilst I was reclothing the great man's foot with its stocking and boot, he asked me what theory of corn-cutting I had that could make me so sure I could effect a "radical cure," and I answered him in these words:

"The corn," said I, "is an *entity*, and not, as is the common gloss of theologians, the mere result of contact between the human cuticle and a hard leathern surface. It is a ONENESS that ever and aye seeks the companionship of nerve-centres. The more the nerves shrink from it, the more the *entity* (*i.e.*, the corn), clings to them, and therefrom arises the common failure of would-be corn-cutters. *They* attack it when the nerves in its vicinity are awake, and they consequently fail, because the entity (the corn) as you cut him more and more, throws out more and more filaments wherewith to grasp the nerves it loves to embrace. But now, mark *my* system. Before attempting to deal with that entity, that oneness, the corn, I contrive to concentrate all the nerve-force in the heart or the brain of the patient. Then the entity, the oneness, the corn, finding the nerves in its vicinity apparently dead, gives itself a kind of holiday, and relinquishes all its tendril grasps. It is at that moment that I seize him, and fling him into that brook, to be conveyed thence into distant seas, wherein he will, peradventure, develope into the tormentor of whales and the agonizer of the little toes of icebergs!"

"I feel instinctively," said the great man, rising up, "that your theory is right, and I also feel instinctively that a few days' residence at my house would do your own nerve-centres a great deal of good. Come with me. We shall find my carriage at Calverly Park."

I had been longing all my life for an adventure, and here was a chance of one. I hadn't ten shillings in the world, and here was a proffer of hospitality. Need it be said that I at once accepted my new friend's offer?

For reasons which will presently be sufficiently obvious, I shall not describe the splendid mansion to which the stranger took me; suffice it to say that after a long summer's-day drive, we arrived at what was evidently Mr. Dingle's home (I shall speak of the stranger as Mr. Dingle in future), that I was introduced to the housekeeper as a person who had come down to the Hall for a few days to assist in arranging some old family papers, and was at once treated with the most courteous liberality.

"Well," said my host, laughing and shaking hands with me as I entered the breakfast-room the next morning, "I hope you have not seen any reason as yet to repent having accepted my eccentric invitation? The fact is, that I am in pressing want of an amanuensis in whom I can place *implicit confidence;* I am a good judge of character, and saw at once that you would suit me admirably. I am convinced that the person who can handle a lancet, or whatever the instrument is you use in your corn-cutting business, can handle a pen equally well; and if you can spare a few weeks to copy some manuscripts for me, I think you will have no reason to be dissatisfied."

I eagerly accepted Mr. Dingle's proposition, and week after week passed away, delightfully for me, in my new occupation.

It was not altogether a new occupation, however; for I had been brought up in a law-stationer's office; and it was fortunate that I had been so, for Mr. Dingle required that his manuscripts should be copied on parchment, and it is irksome to write well on parchment unless you are used to it. But what were the manuscripts which I had to copy like?

There was the most curious part of the whole business. Had I been an ordinary copying clerk I should have failed to notice that there was anything curious in it, but I had been from my childhood an eager reader of the works of the best contemporary English authors, and easily discovered, therefore, that the manuscripts I had been set to copy were from the pens of some of the best of them. Then, again, it would not have seemed to me very wonderful that a gentleman so evidently wealthy as my employer should like to have fairly written extracts from the works of his favourite authors; but I noticed that none of the specimens which I was engaged to copy, of the writings of such authors as Tennyson, Froude, Browning, Buckle, &c., had ever appeared in print. This puzzled me.

"What can induce her," I exclaimed, as I rose, after completing a copy of an exquisite novelette by a famous authoress, "what can induce her to allow that exquisite piece of workmanship to remain unpublished to the world?"

"What has induced," replied my host—who had entered the room unperceived by me—"the pictorial artists of all ages to devote the finest efforts of their pencil or brush to the privacy of the palace or the church? Money, my friend, money! And what has induced the authors of all ages to give broadcast to the world the emanations of their brains? Money, my friend, money! Well, then, if I can purchase a picture or a Cellini cup for my exclusive enjoyment, why not a ballad, an essay, or a philosophical work? That is what I said to myself long ago. I resolved to upset the old system, and, as far as my personal gratification is concerned, I have done so. There are few English authors of note who have lived during the last forty years, of whom I have not purchased, for the exclusive perusal of myself and intimate friends, their finest productions. An expensive amusement, you say? Of course it is; but if I can afford to give five thousand for a picture by Millais, why not as much for a song by Barry Cornwall?"

"I admire your scheme," I replied; "but, still, it seems unfair to deprive the world of such matchless literary productions as those I have lately been copying for you."

"If the public only were in question, my dear sir," replied Mr. Dingle, "I would have a million of each of those productions published to-morrow, and give them away; but"——

My host paused, and I feared that he was about to have a fit, for his eyes glared, and his teeth and hands were clenched. After a few moments, however, he said abruptly,

"Is there any woman in the world that you love?"

I thought of my own Dora, and answered fervently, "Oh, yes!"

"Would you not make any sacrifice to save her from the insults of brutal ruffians? Of course you would! And it is to save *some* of the exquisite and magnificent productions of the master-minds of the age from that vilest of all classes, the so-called *critics*, that I go to vast trouble and expense."

Having myself once published a small volume of poems (by subscription), I could not sufficiently express my admiration of my host's views.

"Pray forgive me for being so curious," I then said, "but how do you prevent the friends, and especially the amanuenses, to whom you display these priceless treasures, from betraying your confidence, and making them known to the world, and therefore the critics?"

"As for my friends," replied Mr. Dingle, "I hold them safe, for they all pursue the same plan; and if one of them were to publish my unique poem by Tupper, I could publish his unique novel by G. P. R. James. We hold each other safe in that way. As for traitorous amanuenses, come into my library, and I will show you how I deal with *them*. Now, then, hold fast to the arms of your chair."

I have heard and read of bleeding to death in a warm bath—I can imagine that the sensations of the individual subjected to that process were somewhat similar to mine as I found myself sinking, immediately after my host had spoken his last words, through a succession of vestibules, which showed they led to saloons of great grandeur.

Softly down, and still softly down, we went, until we reached a little door, on which was written in rubies, which burnt evidently by their own innate light, words—which I must not reveal.

As the door opened of its own accord, my host and myself entered a small apartment, the simplicity of which somewhat strangely contrasted with the sumptuousness to which my host's kindness had lately accustomed me. It resembled, in fact, the room of one of the chief clerks of a merchant's office, being furnished with three or four chairs, a table, and shelves of strongly-bound volumes.

"Read! read!" exclaimed Mr. Dingle, pointing to the ledger-like volumes, "and enjoy such pleasure as few have known!"

I did read; and never shall I forget the hours which I passed in the perusal of works which had been written by their authors with the certainty that they would never be assailed by malignant criticism.

I had rapidly glanced through all the volumes but one, when I paused, not daring to touch it without special permission; for it was bound in diamonds.

"No!" said Mr. Dingle, in answer to my mute appeal. "I allow no one to look into that volume, for it contains the conclusion of '*Christabel*,' as recited to me by Coleridge himself, whilst I was recovering from brain fever. The sole enjoyment of that volume I reserve for myself. And now I will show you how I deal with traitorous amanuenses. Look there!"

As he said "Look there!" Mr. Dingle pointed to a corner of the room, in which two intelligent-looking men were sitting, apparently fast asleep.

"Go and wake them!" exclaimed my employer.

I gently touched the arm of one of them—it was as hard as iron! I tried to shake him—he was immovable! I touched his cheek—it was as cold as marble! I shuddered.

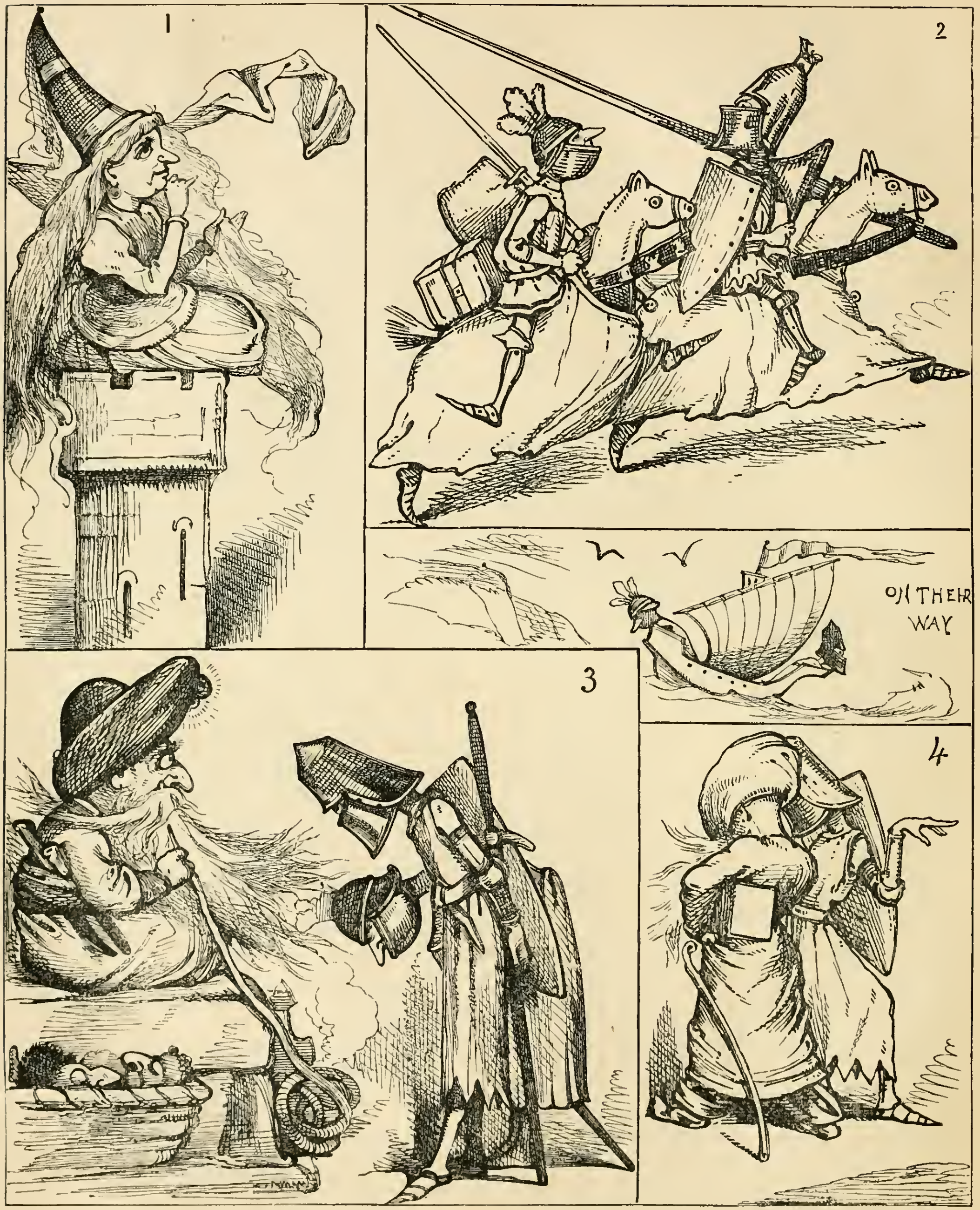
"Those men," said Mr. Dingle, calmly, "were once my amanuenses. One of them published a poem I had given him to copy as his own; the other sold to the publishers a philosophical treatise I had entrusted him with. I appeared to take no notice of their misdeeds; but, possessing, as I do, the power of ossifying persons, by means of certain drugs, I made use of that power in their case."

Again I shuddered.

"Be under no alarm," said Mr. Dingle; "I am sure *you* will never require to be subjected to the process. Reascend with me. I will give you ten thousand pounds, and have you conveyed back to Hurst Wood."

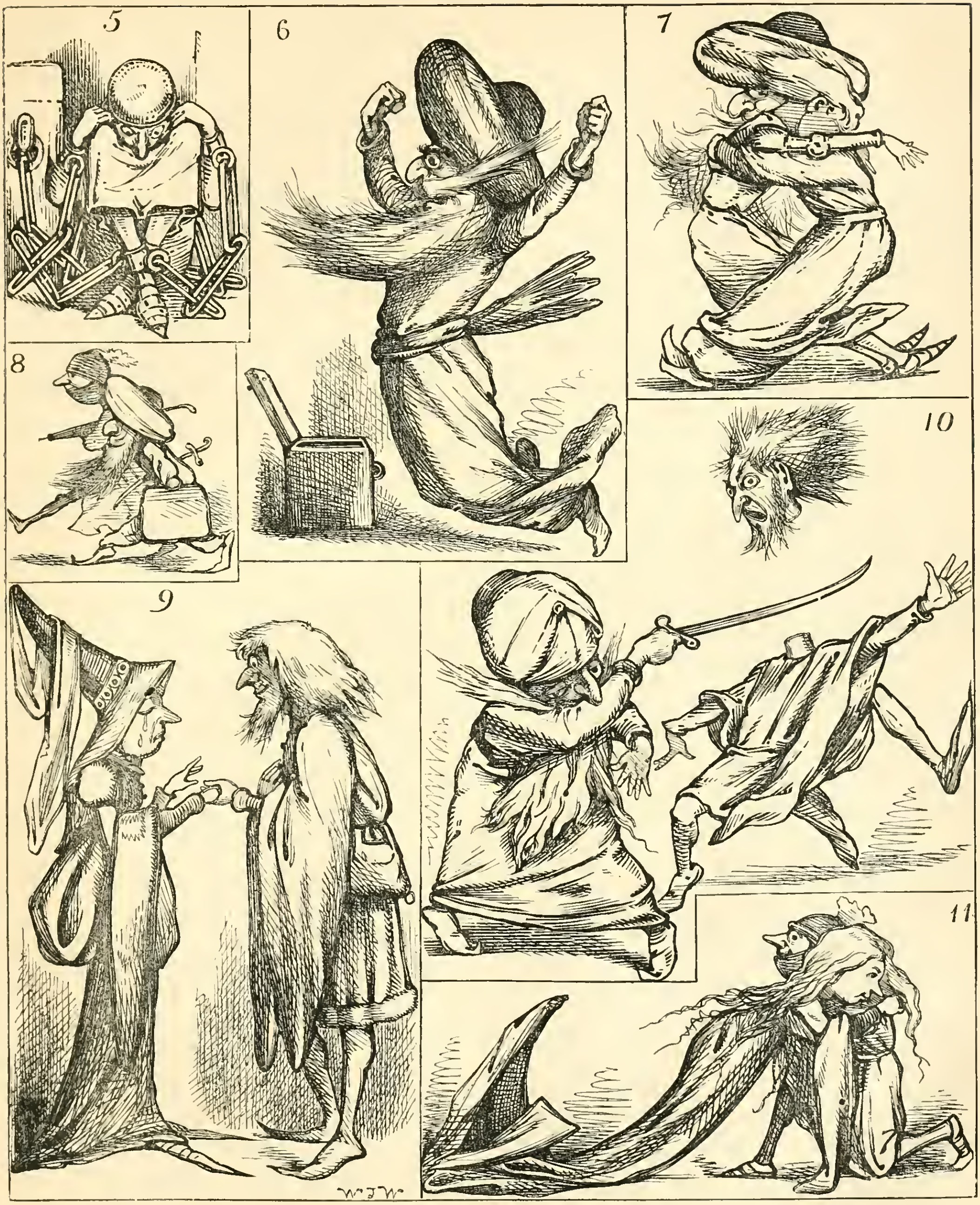
And so he did. JOHN STEBBING.

TWO KNIGHTS AND A DEY. A Romance.



1. The Lady in her bower. 2. Her suitors depart for the Holy Land. 3. On their passage they have a Dey in Morocco.
4. The wicked suitor has an idea, and conveys it in a whisper it to the Dey, accompanied by a valuable casket.

TWO KNIGHTS AND A DEY. A Romance.



5. The whisper carried out—the good Knight in chains. 6. The Dey discovers the casket to be empty.
7. He seeks his prisoner, and liberates him. 8. Accompanies him home to seek revenge.
9. The wicked one's success. 10. The Oriental's revenge, 11. And the triumph of Love.

HOOKED FOUL.

SOME prefer one method and some another; but for real honest sport-yielding pike-fishing, depend upon it there is nothing like a neat spinning-flight. Come, come; don't shrug your shoulders! I know too well how terrible a bore an angler is to an unsympathetic Town man like you, who has not a soul above a brief-bag, and who would not know a gudgeon from a barbel. Bless you! I should disdain to waste a delicious story of rises, runs, bites, strikes, and gaffings, upon the like of you. *My* pearls are reserved for non-readers. Still, as you are in my den, and as you have been kind enough to notice my rod-rack, and the rest of my fishing gear, yonder—which you may notice is in apple-pie order, ready for immediate use—I will trouble you to listen to one reason of my partiality for the spinning-flight.

Let me see, it was—Ah! never mind when it happened. It was not this year, nor last, nor the year before that. Enough that I begin with a certain fresh autumn morning. The crunch of the dogcart wheels on the gravel beneath my bed-room window reminded me that I had overslept myself, and that there would be some one outside cooling his heels, unless he was much altered since I had seen him last, in anything but a Christian frame of mind. My over-sleeping was indulged in at the cost of considerable discomfort, inasmuch as when we had sped merrily over a couple of the ten miles before us, I discovered that neither gaff-hook nor landing-net had been packed up. You call that a trifle, do you? A trifle! But, of course, it is useless to argue with *you*. Out of such trifles great what-is-it's spring, if your favourite poet is to be believed.

Garstanger Park is one of the most beautiful because one of the best timbered in the country. Had that October day on Viscount Garstanger's lake been a blank as to fish, I should have deemed the seventy-mile trip from town, the early rising on a raw morning, and the journey across country, more than compensated for by the russet glory of the autumn-tinted woods, the exquisite proportions of the shrubberies, the artistic management of lawn and garden, the wide prospects caught through the beeches on the knolls, the avenues of patriarch trees, the change of landscape at every curve of the path, and the keen clear atmosphere which you gulped rather than breathed..

This kind of scenery puts you into good humour, and screws up any slack strings of poetry or sentiment there may be in you. It never took me so long before to put my rod together, partly because of the beautiful leaf-tints reflected in the lake, but chiefly because, making ready to enter one of the two punts which belonged to the boat-house, I saw a young lady. She might be handsome or she might not; that I could not determine until she changed her position. It was her compact, flexible figure, and peculiar costume, that first attracted my notice. I was conscious, too, of a freedom of attitude that under any other circumstances would have been displeasing. She stood some distance off, her back towards me, with one foot on the stern-board of the punt, and was postured like an athlete, as, turning slightly away from the lake, with rod over her shoulder, she winched up the loosened coils of a fishing-line.

The boobiest of fellows lay in the bottom of the punt, reading one of Dumas' novels—a shilling edition. He never offered to assist his companion. I would have said "fair" companion, according to the orthodox method, but I had not, so far, discovered whether she were fair or dark. The foot, so firmly planted on the punt, was the small trim foot which, as a rule, belongs to dark beauties; the hair, though dark, was not black, and it was free from any artificial monstrosity. Dress? I fear you have me there: never was there a worse describer of millinery than your humble servant. To put it roughly, I should say the chief article of that costume was a well-built shooting-jacket of grey cloth. It was of a perfectly original design, and impressed you with being fitted up with an infinity of pockets, and of enclosing with sensible tightness a charming, round, lithe figure. I forget the skirts, but they were there.

It was no use coughing or making a violent noise with the oars strapped to our own punt: she would not look round, or satisfy my curiosity in any degree. The boobiest of fellows lazily looked across, lazily screwed his glass into his eye, and lazily made an observation to his companion, who, to do her justice, appeared not to take the slightest notice of him.

Who were they? What were they? Which was the angler? I had, in former times, seen ladies fishing for the lively perch, ay, and whipping a dainty little stream with a dainty little fly-rod for dainty little trout, but the boldest of the lady anglers whom it had been my pleasure to know had certainly drawn a line at the "mighty Luce."

Doubtless this was a good-natured damsel, encouraging that boobiest of fellows in his abominable idleness, by arranging his tackle for him. He had kindled a cigar by the time she had finished the winching-up process, but he was in no hurry to move from his lair. He allowed her to deposit the rod in the punt, to step aboard without assistance, and, by all that was unworthy! to cast off the chain.

A nut-brown maid she at last proved to be, and a very business-like maid, too, with eyes for nothing but the punt and the fishing materials. Briskly seating herself on the thwart, she took the oars in her gloved hands, and pulled out to the centre of the lake, the strokes regular, strong, and determined. Full well I could appreciate her skill, for a pretty figure my companion cut, in his ignorance of the management of our flat-bottomed craft.

Staring, and speechlessness, and wonderment did not aid one, as you may suppose. There happened to be no keepers about; the constant breech-loader reports in the distant plantations indicated their whereabouts with sufficient plainness. So, with curiosity unsatisfied, and much more absorbed and reluctant than is my wont with a sheet of well-preserved water, ruffled by a westerly breeze, at my will, I imitated the nut-brown maid, and pushed off, showing how much I was thinking of her by proceeding in a contrary direction to that she had taken, and inwardly resolving to sneak round about her neighbourhood before the day was over.

Sport was, for a time, indifferent; that is to say, indifferent for Garstanger Park. A few three-pounders were returned to the water, an eight-pounder got away, and as luncheon-time drew nigh, the bag contained only half a dozen fair fish. The fish, you see, so far as I was concerned, were finding an unknown friend in the nut-brown maid.

The time had arrived when the mystery must be cleared up. My companion paddled me slowly to the upper end of the lake, I making a pretence of spinning the water as we progressed. A sudden bend of the shore gave us sight of the other punt. The boobiest of fellows still reclined at his ease, and my nut-brown maid stood confessed a veritable pike-mistress.

What a figure, too, as she lightly swept the bamboo spinning-rod over her left shoulder, and brought it back again for the cast! It was the freest and most graceful I ever witnessed. The bait fell with a minimum of splash into the water, not an inch less than twenty yards the lee side of the punt, and it was spun home at a speed and depth that bespoke the experienced artist.

You may laugh, my friend, but do you not speak of a singer, or dancer, or actor as an "artiste"? Therefore, my signification of the term, your ribald jeer notwithstanding, is quite justifiable. The miserable jester who chuckles over the stale old senseless saying, "A fool at one end and a worm at the other," will not, perhaps, understand me, but that large and increasing class of anglers, who are the product of nineteenth century refinement—yes, I do not withdraw the assertion—these will know how to admire my nymph of the rod. For the space of half an hour she made superb leisurely casts, taking the punt as a centre from which to make the radiations, beginning with a dozen yards, and regularly increasing the distance, until the maximum of twenty yards was reached.

It was some comfort that she just now caught no fish. I felt so much the less ashamed of myself

A very good angler, according to the estimate of my friends, I confess I here found my master—my lady superior. Never an entanglement, never a false throw, never any trouble with rings or reel, never the faintest appearance of exertion was she guilty of. A toxophilite, of the feminine gender, in the act of discharging an arrow from the bow, a huntress "lifting" her horse over a stiff fence, a girl bending to the oars on a silver stream, are fit subjects for any painter, but not worthy of comparison with my Angling Divinity of Garstanger Park.

She answered the purpose, as it were, of a whirlpool to our boat; it began to draw insensibly into the vortex. We approached nearer and nearer. The boobiest of fellows maintained his masterly inactivity, turning over page after page of his buff-covered book, and allowing the nut-brown maid — when, having thoroughly fished her circle, she paddled to new ground—to handle the oars without a scrap of assistance from his long, white, useless fingers.

Aha! she had him at last—not the supine novel-reader—but a fish! For this I had been waiting. A lady who could spin for pike in this most mistressly style, I had for the first time beheld; but what would she do with him when the critical moment arrived? It was, as I might have known, of a piece with the rest. She handled the fresh-water shark with consummate skill: it ought to have been a pleasure to any well-regulated pike to be so scientifically dealt with. I could tell by the quick jerk of the rod that the deluded fish was a good one, and the sharp, prompt little twist of the lady's wrist was proof positive that the triangles had been well struck into him.

Sensible woman! Yet it was so like her sex to permit the captive to bolt about wherever he listed, confident that he was secured, and not objecting to enjoy his hopeless struggles before treating him to the *coup de grâce*. The pike seemed particularly uncomfortable, and the lady smiled a smile of calm and virtuous content as he gave evidence of his perturbed state of mind. He kept well down into the deep, describing, as the line indicated, a series of strange mathematical figures.

The moment the angleress tightened on him, he leaped, shining like gold, a foot out of the water!—bringing another quiet smile into her placid face when he fell back. Her theory was to give her enemy plenty of line—(and let me tell you in an "aside," there are worse notions than that for other pursuits than pike-fishing). The line was hauled in and neatly deposited in circles on the floor of the punt; and when, at length, the broad burnished side of the conquered one appeared on the surface at the exact spot necessary for successful bagging, the lady, with a slight flush of cheek and flash of eye, inserted the gaff under his gaping gill, and lifted him deftly over the gunwale.

A cheery bell-metal laugh broke the silence. The game—objecting, maybe, to the morality of Mons. Dumas—flapped and floundered at the young gentleman in the stern, causing him to splutter, to drop "Beau Tancrede," and jump so ludicrously, that the nut-brown maid indulged in several merry peals. The fish could not frighten her: to be sure, petticoats are a protection to a lady in more ways than one. But she made no effort to get out of his way when he descended against her skirts; on the contrary, she waited her opportunity—thrust her forefinger and thumb into the eye-sockets, and unhooking the gimp to which the hooks were attached from the tracing-swivel, dropped his pikeship, with due regard to decency and preservation, into a large rush basket that, I suspect, had often done similar duty aforetime.

The lady was uncommonly methodical, I noticed. In precisely the proper place for handiness, there was a tin case, stored with spinning tackle already baited, leaving her nothing to do at each capture but attach the loop to the swivel. This saved her the unpleasant necessity of meddling with the small dead fish employed as bait, and the much more unpleasant necessity of gouging the murderous triangles out of the pike's formidable jaws—labour I fain hoped fell to the share of some male relative at home.

A complimentary sentence trembled at the tip of my tongue, but her appearance furnished me no encouragement to utter it. Besides, there was no time, since before resuming operations she gave her punt the benefit of half a dozen vigorous strokes of the oars, by which movement the few paces which had separated us were quadrupled; and, as you must confess, it would have been simply ridiculous to make a speaking trumpet of your hand, and bawl at the top of your voice, "Allow me, madam," or "dear madam," as the case might be, "to congratulate you upon the clever manner in which you killed that fish." Absurd, would it not?

My amateur boatman furthermore began to taunt me upon my idleness, my non-success, my moon-strucky behaviour. To taunt was to rouse. I (metaphorically) girded up my loins, and bade the fish to come on, that I might smite them hip and thigh with great slaughter. I invoked the aid of the late Izaak Walton, Esq., and hummed a bar or two of "Doughty Deeds." I so manœuvred the punt that the nut-brown unknown should have me in view, to contrast my manly proportions, if haply she looked our way, with the lanky, flax-headed, insipid dawdler, whose general purpose in the economy of Nature, and particular business in that punt, were unsolved conundrums to me just then.

Swish! whistle! splash! spin! and at it I went. Heigho! What was this? A tree-trunk submerged? Bravo! It was one of the mighty ones of the lake. Feeling the hooks, he went off, pulling like a barge. Twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred yards of line were run straight off the reel, without so much as a "By your leave." It was that peculiar run by which a substantial prize is always known, be it salmon, trout, or pike; none of your tug-tugs, dart-darts, here-there-and-everywhere up-and-down movement, but a steady, heavy, sullen travelling away from the base of assault. The stricken fish headed straight for the bow of the other punt. My companion, taking his commands from me, backed water, and we followed. My lady had paused in her work, and stood, rod in hand, with a dark green belt of firs as a distant background, and the ruddy sun striking slantwise upon her, a model for a statue. She forgot the formal reserve of the lady, in the enthusiasm of the sportswoman.

"You have a fine fish there!" she ejaculated, quite as delighted as if it were her luck, and not mine.

"Indeed yes," I replied, beginning to strain upon the object in question; "but unfortunately I have no gaff."

"Oh, take mine. Do you think I can help you?" she said.

The fish was at that moment making a fresh spurt, and it behoved me to be wary; but be the consequences what they might, I was bound to look into her face, and express my thanks with eye as well as lip. Well, never mind. There are obvious reasons why it would be better to say no more upon this part of the proceeding.

As to the pike, there he is, stuffed and still in the lower case. Judge for yourself the fun we—I advisedly deem it a partnership matter—had before we made his personal acquaintance. We brought the punts close together, and before I knew her intentions, my newly-made friend had stepped nimbly into my boat and was at my side, quietly biding the time to strike. I wished to transfer the rod to her, and take the gaffing upon myself; she pleaded hard to have the honour, and I vow that if she had pleaded to gaff me, in lieu of the fish, so charmingly did she plead, I would have interposed no objection.

Half an hour fully were we privileged to stand side by side waiting for the end. To tell you the whole truth, I delayed the consummation till for very shame I had to present the butt of the rod to the fish; and even that would not have been ventured upon, but for a hint from the lady that the fish's extremity was my opportunity. Thereupon I closed with him, brought him to reaching distance, and enjoyed the felicity of beholding the sharp gaff unerringly employed, and the monster hauled, viciously plunging, out of his native element.

"Ha! ha! hooked foul!" quoth the nut-brown maid, with a little dance of astonishment. It was even so; the fish was, as anglers put it, "hooked foul."

Then up and spake the being in the other boat, who had been, I am well assured, forgotten by the entire company, while a nobler creature, albeit of the finny order, had engaged our attention. Probably he had been watching us out of the corner of his fishy-looking eye, though now he pretended languidly to put aside his book for the first time.

"Did I underthtand, Tharah, that you thaid 'Hooked foul'?" he drawled.

She turned a trifle sharply towards him, as if recalled by the question into another and less pleasant state of being; so at least I flattered myself.

"I don't know what you understood, Frank, but that is what I said. It may not be grammar, but it is a perfectly well-known technical phrase. Yes; I said 'Hooked foul,'" she boldly answered.

"And will you tell me, Tharah, what ith 'hooked foul'?"

"'Hooked foul,' Frank," she stated, without looking at her questioner, "means 'hooked foul.' That is to say, you are trying to hook something in one way, fail to do so, but hook it in another not quite so straightforward. You don't get it by hook, but by crook."

This being not a very lucid explanation, I was emboldened to take up the parable. Said I, with an air of *nonchalant* wisdom,

"You see, this fish, if caught in the orthodox way, would have snapped at the baited hooks, and enclosed them with his jaws. He probably went so far as the snap, and missed the bait, but the revolving hooks caught him on the shoulder, as you observe, and here he is. The great point, after all, is that he is hooked somehow."

"It's not a pleasant thing to be 'hooked foul,' Frank," observed the young lady who had been addressed as Sarah.

"P'wapth not, Tharah," he rejoined, with a greenish tinge in his eye; "but, ath you thay, the great point ith that your fith ith hooked thomehow."

What possessed me, unless the thing called Fate, to take part in a dialogue which had most evidently assumed a meaning personal to the speakers, I know not, but I must needs fix my eye upon the young man, and observe,

"Well, that depends on circumstances, you know. A fish 'hooked foul,' you should remember, has a very good chance of shaking itself free."

This was but a random shot, but, like many another bow at a venture, it went home. The lisper changed to the colour of tallow, while the nut-brown maid's face was suddenly warmed from within by a crimson flush. However, the mischief was done, and we separated in constraint. The evening drew on apace, and at dusk we found ourselves together again at the lodge, weighing the prize. It was sunset. The woods were crowned with the golden glow of the west; the lady stood in the reflection, its queen. The boobiest of fellows sulked at the garden gate; we could afford to dispense with his company. It is best to be particular: that fish weighed twenty-nine pounds five ounces and one quarter, by the keeper's steelyard.

"A very fine fish, sir. Good night," the lady said.

"Yes, very fine; good night," I answered, doffing my deerstalker, of course; the lout at the gate scowling covertly the while.

And was that all? What more would you wish? Simply a casual meeting, and an abrupt parting. What more would you have?

Let me detain you another moment. There was something else. The nut-brown maid was a clergyman's daughter, Miss Graham by name. So much I found out by directly questioning the keeper. I drove out of Garstanger Park, sincerely wishing it had been my fortune to know more of her, debating whether the phase of strong-mindedness I had seen was a desirable symptom for a young lady and a clergyman's daughter, and altogether a little—the smallest bit—in love with her.

A month or two later came that German episode of mine, and the nut-brown maid, though not absolutely forgotten, was not a frequent or troublesome visitor at Memory's door. She used to knock at it in the quiet hours sometimes, and I would always open it, and admit and keep her there as long as possible. But I can conscientiously aver she was merely as the refrain of a dreamy melody floating from a distance. I was destined to be somewhat rudely reminded of her and hers on my return to England.

Dozing in the big easy chair of my sitting-room one twilight, the tableau I described at the keeper's lodge came to me in a vision, in which the young man skulking at the gate seemed to change into the pike hanging from the steelyard. It may seem very like a storyteller's trick to say it, but I was awakened by a knocking at my door, and the young man himself pushed past the servant, and stalked into the room.

"Do you thee thith whip?" he said, flourishing a heavy-thonged hunting weapon.

"Thit down, young man," I answered, mockingly, but mighty wrathful, you may be certain, at the outrage, the meaning of which was evident.

"Do you thee thith whip?" he shrieked, moving towards me, who had not yet risen from my dozing posture.

It was an unfortunate occurrence. A week within a day elapsed before he could be removed into the country, and it cost me a good deal of money for doctoring, to say nothing of that possible verdict of "manslaughter," which haunted me morning, noon, and night. I must acknowledge, as he did afterwards, that the thrashing did him good; it made him penitent, and during the penitence a fit of communicativeness supervened.

It appeared (as learned counsel say to juries) that he was a Graham too, a cousin of the young lady with the nut-brown face, and—but you already guess it—engaged to her almost from childhood, in accordance with the fond parents' desires. That they cordially hated each other, both the demands of truth and the requirements of fiction compel me to declare. Only, Harold Graham was not prepared to relinquish the hard cash which was to be his when he married his Cousin Sarah. The day at Garstanger Park was a crisis in their career. Mr. Graham thought fit, after the tableau at the lodge, to remonstrate with his affianced; first, for using the expression "Hooked foul," and next, for being what he impertinently characterized unwomanly in her amusements. While my friend and I were rattling through the lanes in happy content, that youthful couple were having, in vulgar parlance, quite a respectable row. Somehow I, the unknown stranger, was introduced into the quarrel, and Mademoiselle indiscreetly made comparisons.

"The fact is," she said, "I don't forget what that young gentleman so sensibly remarked: 'A fish hooked foul *has a very good chance of shaking itself free.*'"

From that moment Sarah Graham devoted herself to the task of shaking herself free: she considered she was "hooked foul." From that moment Harold Graham gave himself up to revenge. There was one slight difficulty to be overcome, viz., his ignorance of my name, address, and station. It took him months to get over it. He spent a little fortune, they say, in journeys to London, hoping to meet me by accident. Finally he sought Lord Garstanger, and pretending I had lent him a flask, or winch, or cigar-case, or something which he wished to return, found out my whereabouts. He had, in some inconceivable manner, stumbled upon the notion that I was in communication with his cousin, and that I was supplanting him. She herself rather encouraged the idea to spite him, and by-and-bye his hatred of me became a mania.

Shall I detain you much longer? No. I have placed the ends of the skein in your hands: it is for you to gather them up. Harold Graham was a poor weak creature; he was never known to display energy before the interval between our day at Garstanger Park and the athletic exercise he and I took in my sitting-room, and since then he has subsided into a sort of amateur idiotcy.

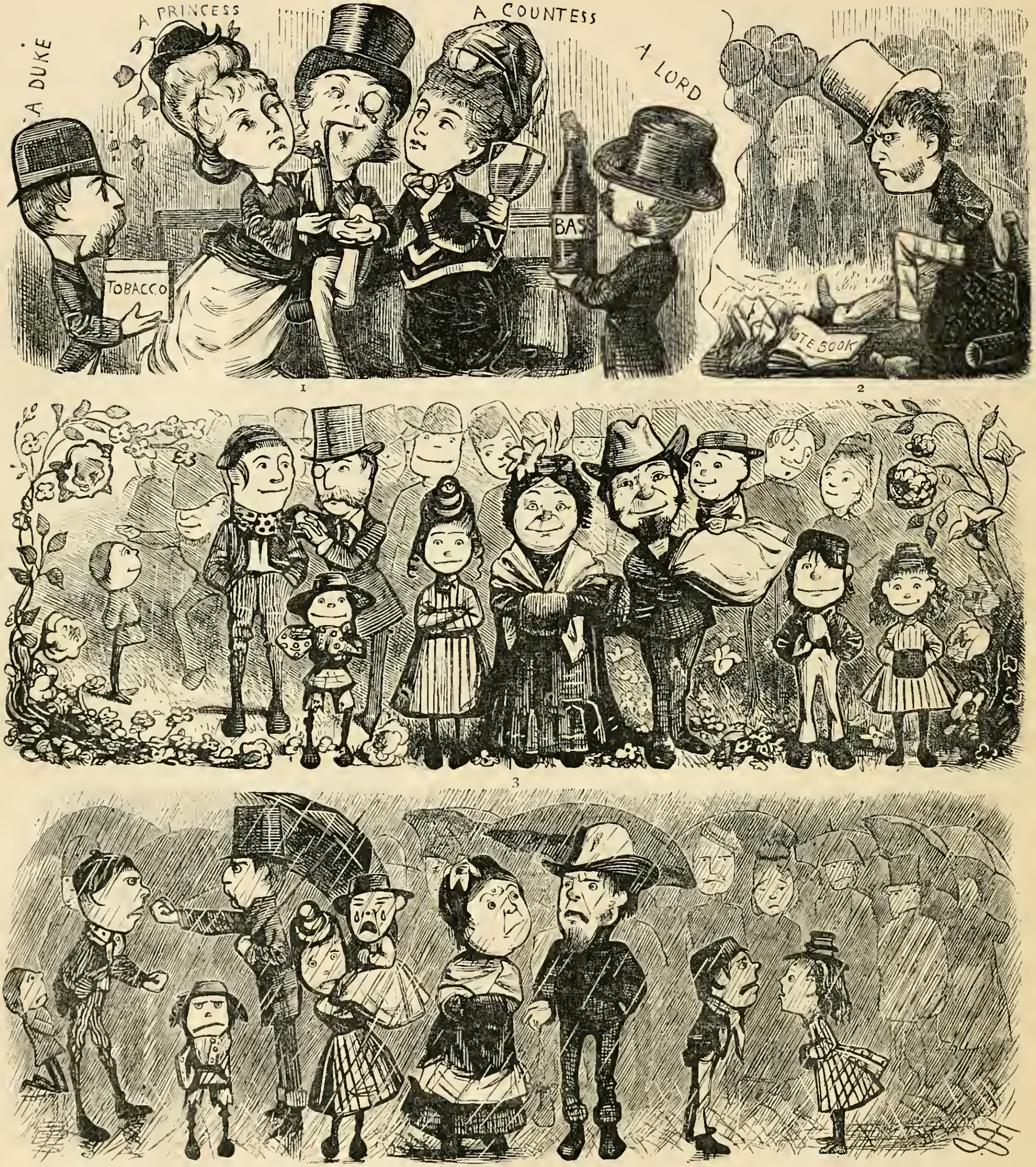
And now you ask me whether I do not consider Sarah Graham a very objectionable young woman? In confidence, I assure you I do not. I take your vehement affirmation of a contrary opinion as a sign of profound insight into human character, my young friend. Don't be angry with me, if I suggest we should agree to differ.

But here's the good wife with the bairns to say "good night!" Let us ask her to decide between us. Does she know the story? Pretty well, I believe! Between ourselves, old fellow, she is the nut-brown maid!

W. Senior.

* * *

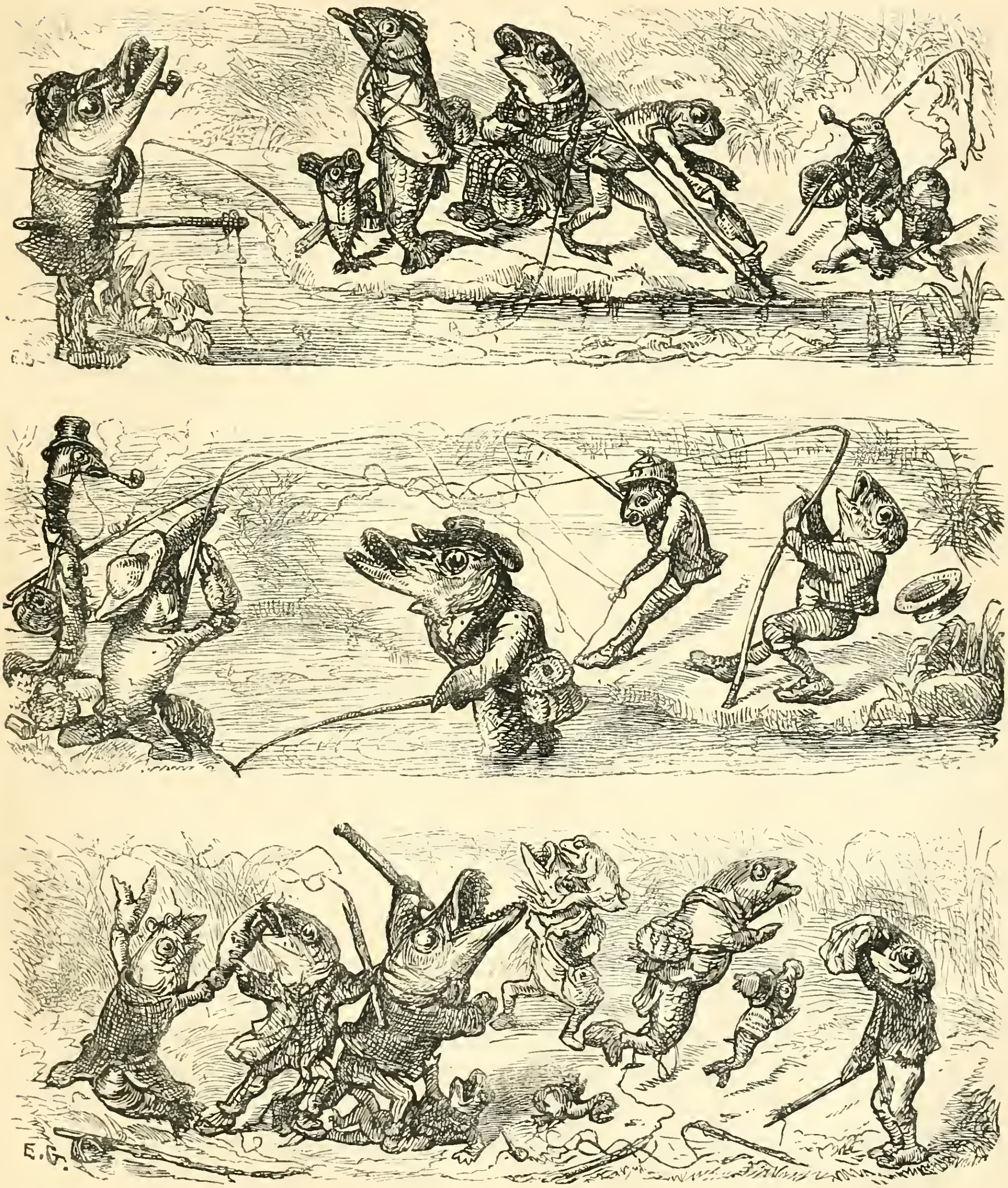
DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.


A DUKE
A PRINCESS
A COUNTESS
A LORD
TOBACCO
BASS
OTE BOOK
1
2
3
4

It is a curious fact what widely different impressions two men will receive of the same thing:—

1. There was a certain reporter who went forth to report on a certain public occasion, and that reporter was made much of.
2. And there was another reporter, who was crowded away in a corner and forgotten.
3. And I made a sketch of the scene according to the first reporter's account, and it was a picture of unbounded happiness;
4. While the second reporter's view of the proceeding appeared to be entirely different.

FISHING. An Allegory.



See page 50.]

FISHING. An Allegory.

TELL me, I pray, Monsieur Griset,
What sort of fishers are these, eh?
Tadpole, eft, gudgeon, pike, trout—
What are the creatures about?

Do fishes bait for each other,
Just as man baits for his brother?
And can it be, when they angle,
Sometimes their lines will entangle?

Well, one unscrupulous man
Oft mars another rogue's plan.

But do the fish, you suppose,
Come for that reason to blows?

Rogues, when they quarrel, of course,
Must invoke law, and not force.
So, with this party of fish,
Men to compare if you wish;

I can but say, *paribus cœteris*,
(Changed order to chime with the metre is)—
If equal as far as the rest of it,
In the last clause the fish have the best of it.

For though sticks deal very hard strokes,
The costs a pen draws are no jokes!

THE FAMILY CAT.

IT was the morning of all mornings—Christmas morning. Johnny had a box of tools with which to cut, bore, saw, and hammer at everything in and about the house, and so damage the estate at the rate of twenty pounds per year. Jimmy had a new bat, a ball, a drum, and a toot-horn, which made his mother sick. Mr. Crab sent Jimmy that toot-horn. Mr. Crab was an old suitor of Jimmy's mother. She refused him. Now he never neglects an opportunity of tormenting that family. Jane had two gold-fish and a canary. Everybody had something, save the family cat. He rubbed and purred around, wishing to show that he took part in the general rejoicing, and wondering why he did not receive his share of attention. He was a fine portly cat, grey streaked with black, large yellow eyes, and splendid whiskers.

Sunday Christmas.

This Christmas happened to come on Sunday; so the presents were put away. It was not proper that they should be more than shown to the children. Still, Jane's canary-bird and gold-fish were left. The children expended their admiration on the globes and cage. Jimmy did steal out once in a while, and give a blast on that toot-horn which Mr. Crab had sent him. He had managed to secure and hide it under the back steps. At last his mother captured the instrument, and it became silent. The dinner-hour came. There were turkeys, mince pies, and plum puddings. Pa and Ma, Johnny, Jimmy, and Jane, Cousin Sam, and Mr. Smith, sat at the feast.

Neglect and Deceit.

All this time the family cat sat silently by the fire, growing more and more wrathy. They had even forgotten that morning to give him breakfast. Once, when he had stepped into the kitchen and intimated that he was hungry, by a gentle and persuasive "mew," the cook insulted him with a spiteful "Scat!" a word only properly applicable to common street or barn cats. So he sat occasionally stroking his whiskers with his right paw. Yet he looked none of the rage which boiled within. There was an occasional opening of the two yellow slits where were his eyes; a sort of lazy, self-satisfied, reflective closing and shutting, as if agreeable and soothing thoughts about general matters were passing through his mind. But had you watched him very closely, you would have seen that head ever and anon turn very quickly in the direction of the canary-bird and gold-fish, and the two yellow slits would glare with all the wildness of his race. He was laying plans.

A CAT IN LAMB'S CLOTHING.

To have thus seen him there, you would have said that no more correct or respectable cat lived in London. Yet it was all outside respectability. There came not a night but that this demure family cat was scrambling over barn and housetop, screeching, swearing, cursing, caterwauling, and visiting all sorts of disreputable cats. He was not only vicious, but among vicious and degraded cats he was esteemed a dangerous and troublesome character. He had ruined the peace of half a score of families. He had clawed an eye from his first wife. Not a mother in London would trust him with her daughters. Yet he was very stylish; and, at the Royal Back Yard Catalan Opera, stood in his private box and ogled young and blooming kittens just entering cathood, as they came under the protection of their mothers and brothers.

SOPORIFIC FESTIVITY.

The turkey, the pie, the Christmas pudding, and the Christmas sermon had their usual effect. Early in the evening Pa and Ma became dull and sleepy. Mr. Smith had given his opinion of the Shah; Cousin Sam narrated his experiences at the last autumn manœuvres. Both had left—everybody was glad—everybody went to bed.

WHEN GRAVEYARDS YAWN!

The family cat still seemingly dozed by the smouldering fire. The house became still. At last, the nibblings of the nightly mice were heard, and the cracklings and settlings which come to all houses at night. Then the family cat aroused himself. He was a different cat. His tail stood no longer erect in the air, his back was no longer arched, his head no longer kept half on one side, as when he rubs about your ankles, begging for a caress or a slice of turkey. His tail settled; his whiskers were pointed at a different angle; his eyes were wide open: he looked business.

HIS OPINIONS.

"So," said he, "they think to do me out of my Christmas dinner, do they? We'll see. Do they take me for a fool? Do they think I'm a meek and humble purrer and whiner? I think I'll get even with them all yet!"

PLOTS.

The mice were heard nibbling away in the dark corners.

"Nibble away to-night!" said the family cat. "They may eat rats and mice who can get nothing else. I'm after a game supper! Let's see—what shall I have first?—fish or fowl? Fish, of course! That's the way it comes on the bill of fare. There's the soup, though! Hum! I'll drink my soup from the gold-fish globes. It's weak, but the fish with it will give it body."

FOUL PURPOSE.

The canary and the gold-fish! It was for them he had laid his plans!

MIDNIGHT MURDER.

We will not describe the tragedy. It is scarcely fitting for a Christmas story. When all was over, the gold-fish globe lay shivered on the floor; the bird-cage was there also, upset and empty! Empty? Oh, no! not quite. In the bottom lay a little yellow head torn from the body. Not a soul in the house had woke amid the racket—the cries and flutterings of Tip—the crash of glass—the fall of the cage!

Turkey and plum pudding had done their soporific work. This well the family cat knew: to this he had trusted.

Domestic Ghastliness.

Just as the family had left it was the room: the chairs, irregularly drawn together, inanimately sociable; the dinner-table with the fruit dessert not removed—all this was to be seen in the apartment by the dull gleam of the dying coal fire in the grate, and in his accustomed corner sat the family cat cleaning his whiskers, and by him was a pile of feathers and a few fish-bones.

Vice.

"Well," said he, "I feel refreshed. I think I'll go out and see a little life."

He went out by a private door in the cellar. All fast and fashionable cats have private doors to their dwellings.

Black Dick.

Just as the family cat emerged into the back yard, who should come along but old Black Dick. Black Dick was a vagrant, a pauper cat. He had but one eye, and a stub tail. He eked out a miserable existence, partly by begging and partly by writing lying epitaphs for deceased family cats.

"Say," said Dick, "got a sixpence about you? I ain't had anything to eat or drink to-day."

The family cat was about, as usual, to snub Black Dick. Suddenly a thought occurred to him.

Covering Tracks.

"Somebody," said he to himself, "must be hung for this scrape of mine. It might as well be Black Dick as any one else. The family *might* suspect me. It's well to be prepared for all emergencies."

"Black Dick," said the family cat, "there's my private door. You've been in the house before. You know the road to the dining-room: cold leavings—turkey, chicken, wine, fresh gold-fish, bloody canary!—Scat!"

Black Dick rushed for the door. The family cat sneaked softly after him, and turned an outside bolt. Black Dick was a prisoner, but he knew it not until he had finished his lunch.

Erring Justice.

Next morning there was an execution without trial, judge, or jury. Black Dick's gory limp corpse was flung into a street not far from Euston Square.

Vice its own Reward.

About nine o'clock the same morning, the family cat made his appearance—clean, sleek, newly-shaved, and his whiskers curled. He sat as usual demurely by the fireside. Those yellow eye-slits lazily and good-humouredly open and close. Occasionally they glance upward reflectively to an empty bird-cage on the wall. The children mourn for poor Tip. The family cat draws down the corners of his mouth.

"My poor gold-fish!" says Jane.

The lower jaw of the family cat still further elongates.

"That wicked, wicked Black Dick!" say they all.

And the family cat murmurs,

"Verily, the horn of the wicked shall be put down, and the way of transgressors is hard."

Prentice Mulford.

MY PLAY.

THE world is very far from fair
To people born to ornament it;
It snubs the men who do and dare,
But, never mind!—it will repent it.

A blighted being, you may say;
But no; for, after great distresses,
I'm proud to say my favourite play
Turned out the greatest of successes.

I wrote a play some time ago
(I have premised that it was acted),
I sent it widely to and fro,
Till managers became distracted.

I pestered every one I knew;
I tried the most expensive dodges:
I gave them dinners up at Kew;
I terrified masonic lodges;

I sonnetized an actress fair,
I feasted several leading actors;
But found at last they only were
Among my very worst detractors.

I found, as every tyro will
In this obstructive age of iron,
My name displayed in any bill
Could not compare with that of Byron.

They told me all my chance was *nil*,
In fact, that I must be a failer,
Unless I pillaged with a will,
And ran abreast with Mr. Taylor.

This play was tragical at first,
Its mechanism most deserving—
At least I thought so—at the worst
It might have suited Mr. Irving.

A story classical I took,
I cribbed it at the Brit. Museum;
With blank verse garnished made the book,
And sent it off to the Lyceum.

A stern refusal there, and so,
To rid myself of such distresses,
I made my mind up then to go
And try it on at the Princess's.

The manager's behaviour might
Have been at all events politer:
I grieve to say he wished to fight
The most accomplished present writer.

To lawyers of the longest robe,
To clergy, and anon to laity,
The play was read; then to the Globe
I sent it after, and the Gaiety.

But here I found a sad rebuff,
Where managers I hoped were plastic:
"Your play may be quite good enough,
But then, you see, it's not elastic."

About my play I then had doubt,
And gave it treatment anatomic:
In fact, I cut the tragic out,
And made of it a drama comic.

But even here persistence fails:
No matter how much wear and worry,
It didn't suit the Prince of Wales',
They wouldn't have it at the Surrey.

Scheme after scheme in vain I planned,
Till, looking at a panorama,
It struck me I would try my hand
Restoring the Romantic Drama.

The people seemed to like the stuff
Descriptive of the pictures faded:
"Unless I am a very muff,
My words must tell as well as they did."

In this new form the play was cast,
Began a new career of sorrow;
From playhouse unto playhouse passed,
And never stayed beyond the morrow.

A friend then said, "It is too long,
Too long," he said, "and too majestic."
I took two acts, I made them strong,
And turned it to a piece domestic—

With failure dire; on every hand
I enemies had made myself; I
Dared not to venture near the Strand,
And could not enter the Adelphi.

I tried the model Gallic stage,
And put the play in pure Parisian,
But Frenchmen turned on me in rage,
And sent me back with great derision.

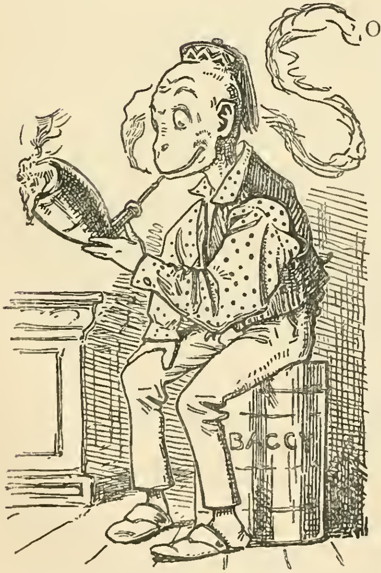
A one-act farce, a comic scene,
 A ballad for an entertainer,
I tried them one by one, I ween,
 But never was one whit the gainer.

A vulgar cad said, "This won't do;
 'T will only bring you to the work 'us;
Just alter it, and send it to
 The people down at Astley's Circus."

My patience, now worn out, you see,
 Had given place to nought but anger—
A great success it proved to be,
 Played in the ring by Messrs. Sanger.

JOHN THOMSON.

SMOKING FRAGMENTS.



SOMETIMES, and I dare say a great deal oftener, in the course of an eventful life, I have said to myself—"Why do I smoke? why does any body smoke? I have, however—and I freely admit the fault is nobody's but my own—never received a satisfactory answer to so important a question. A pipe now might assist me in the required solution. . . .

I have had two pipes and a cigar, and have, by degrees, arrived at the conclusion that I smoke because I like it. I don't think I should have discovered this but for the fact that the cigar was bad, and that I threw a great part of it away; therefore, I imagine that I should not smoke if I did not like smoking. But I submit this without prejudice, as I am not at all sure about it. For I know I did not like smoking when I first began—yet I bravely persevered. . . . . . .

I remarked just now that my life has been eventful—and so it has. But its events have lain nearly all in one direction, and have been to a considerable extent mixed up with pipes, cigars, and tobacco—sickness, nausea, and repentance. Still, these are all very powerful things in their way; so why should I repine? As I have no intention of repining, I will not attempt to answer the question. . . . . .

I don't suppose I shall ever forget my first smoke, though there is nothing singular about that. I mean my first tobacco smoke—that is, my first cigar, which maybe was not my first tobacco smoke after all. Between the age of two and ten my ambitious soul had been satisfied with cane and brown paper, though when I was about six I hit upon the daring expedient of smoking tea-leaves out of my father's black meerschaum. There must have been something powerful about that pipe, for the first "draw" seemed to reach down to my very toes. I went down a whole flight of stairs in once, and stayed at the bottom—stayed there until assistance came. The outward application I received from the assistance, when it arrived, for breaking that pipe, had the singular effect of destroying all sickness; still, I forswore pipes for a long time, and smoked my cane or brown paper with renewed zest. . . . . . .

I was growing up fast, and had, as I then thought, nearly reached manhood — was, indeed, nearly eleven—when a boy older even than myself, and with almost as daring a spirit, asked me one evening as we were leaving school if I 'd got any money. I told him with conscious pride that I had a halfpenny. Strange to say—I am not joking, for we were the children of poor but honest and industrious parents —he had another, and after considerable consultation we amalgamated our funds, bought a penny "Queen," and had it cut in two. My half was not large, but when I 'd got it well alight, and strutted down Montague Place and round Russell Square, I felt very important indeed. The cigar had a very drying effect, though, and by the time Woburn Place was reached, I fancied a drink from the pump near the corner would do me no harm. So I had one. I don't know much of what happened afterwards, except that a pale feeling took possession of me, and deprived me of all power over my legs, and that after considerable difficulty in getting home, I had considerable difficulty in getting out again, as my parents were sceptical about the power of chocolate to create such an alarming disturbance of the stomach. . . . .

During the first half of my teens, I lived in a chronic state of pipe-purchasing for myself, and pipe-presentation to my friends. When I hadn't got any friends I threw the pipes away, though I never remember doing so—I never in the course of the before-mentioned eventful life knew man or boy to be without friends when he had got anything to give away. As this remark has, however, been, I fancy, made before, and as it has no connection much with smoke, I will pass on. I used, on receipt of my pocket-money on Saturday, to go straight to a tobacconist's in Tottenham Court Road, and buy a pipe and tobacco. Saturday night and Sunday were generally occupied with sickness and sorrow; and Monday was devoted to the usual pipe-presentation, and to the registration of a vow never to smoke again. But on the next Saturday that same old pipe-man lured me by a fresh arrangement of his stock, and the performance was resumed. I do believe that I bought pipes enough for the whole British army during that portion of my eventful existence. . . . .

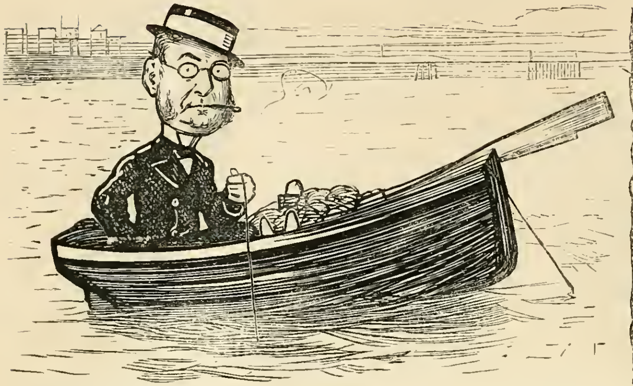
But perseverance brought me a reward at last. Never shall I forget the sensations of delight I experienced when first I saw the pale colour, due to my exertions alone, show through my cutty. New hope burned within my bosom, and I determined to brown that pipe or die. That night I had a second smoke, and though my inside and all that was in it at the time rebelled fearfully, I was firm; the colour deepened on the bowl, and ultimately all was umber and happiness. That one cutty pipe may have preserved me from the ranks of the Anti-Tobacco Society, for though I am hard as adamant, I don't think human nature or the Bank of England could have continued to stand matters as they were going up to the colouring period. And now see what practice will do. I am open to bet that I smoke two pipes of returns or bird's-eye in succession without being "turned up." Man and money ready any day at 80 Fleet Street. Mind, only ordinary pipes—no cadging bowls. . . . .

I could tell you a good deal more about pipes and what I have done with them, but neither space nor the Editor will permit me, and so I must perforce conclude. I may as well, however, remark that my last effort in the colouring line has not been particularly successful. I bought a meerschaum pipe—at least, I bought it as a meerschaum pipe—and I should think it is the one actual hardest old *dudheen* in the habitable world. I have tried all manner of means to soften it, including boiling and throwing against brick walls, but it is still obdurate. I 've half a mind to give it away.

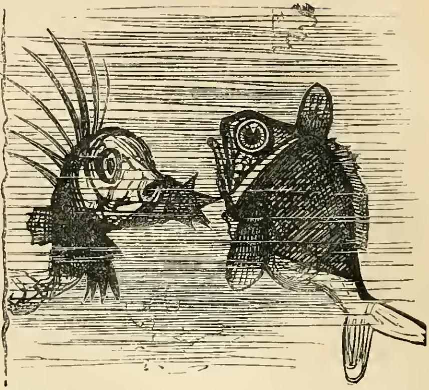
H. J. M. S.

* * *

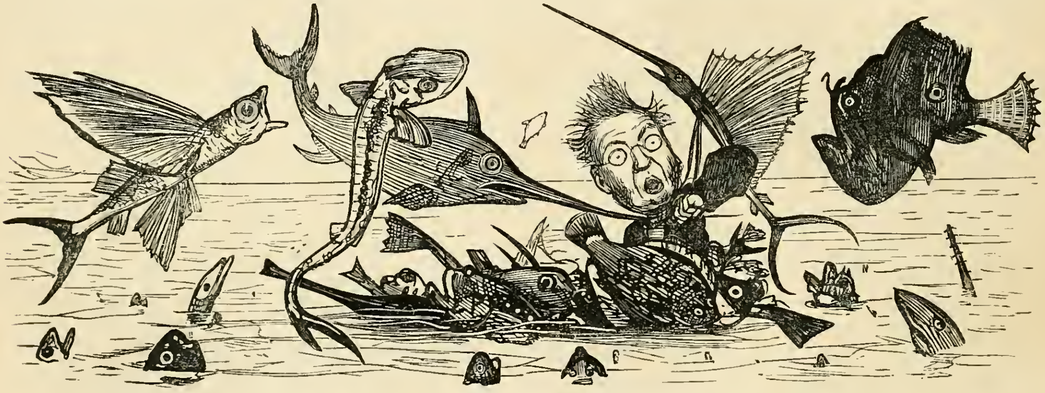
VERY FISHY. Communicated by Submarine Telegraph.



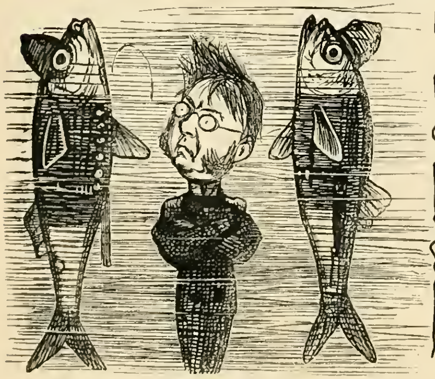
A certain scientific gentleman was trying to catch subjects for his aquarium;



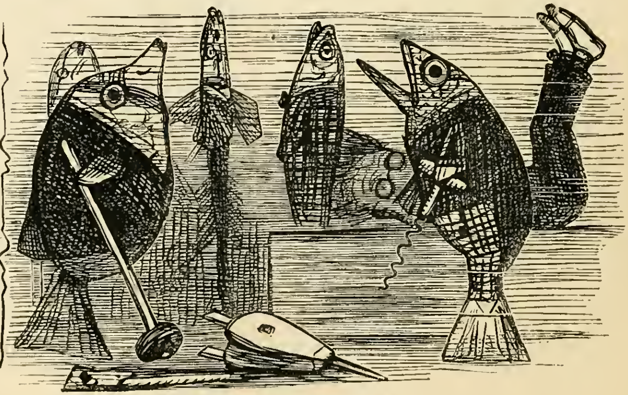
And it came to pass that a certain scientific fish was on the look-out for a specimen of the genus *homo.* "Let us, my friend," said he, "sacrifice ourselves in the cause of science. Just fasten yourself on the hook, I'll hang on to your tail, and we'll lug him in." But his friend made him a very rude reply.



So he got up a Joint-Stock Company and tried another dodge,

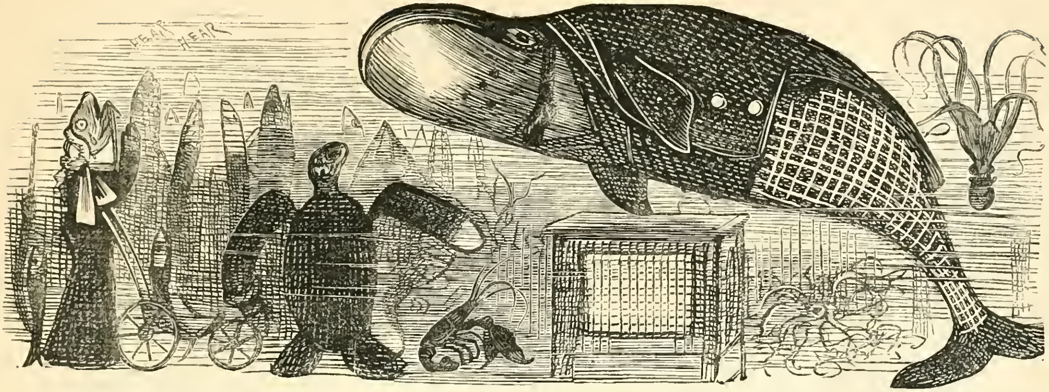


And with complete success.

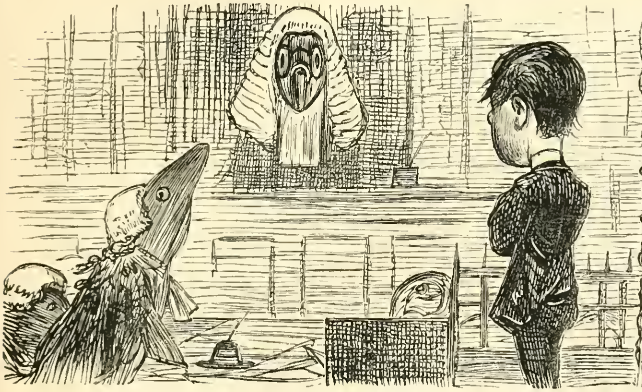


Some interesting experiments on a vile body.

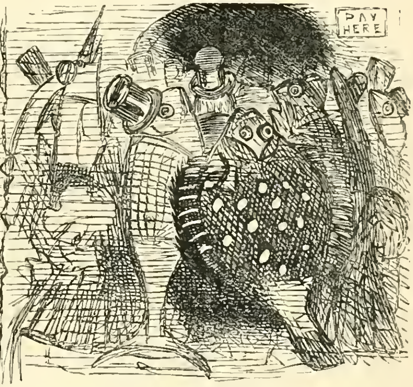
VERY FISHY. Communicated by Submarine Telegraph.



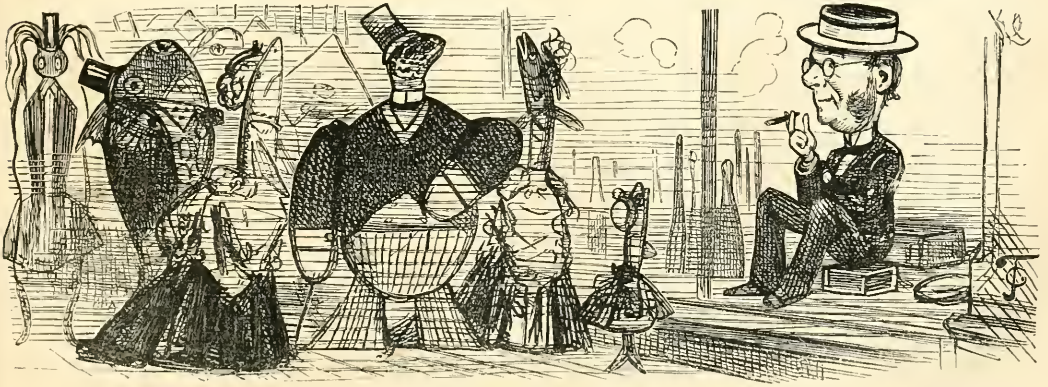
Grand indignation meeting of the widows and orphans of the S. G.'s victims. Mr. Octopus in the chair. The meeting addressed by a well-known professional spouter, who calls aloud for vengeance,—



And gets it. The S. G. is tried,



And condemned to be imprisoned and exhibited for life.



And this is the last we heard of him.

A CLERKENWELL CALAMITY.

BEN BLOCK—that is, the Ben Block I knew—was anything but a veteran of naval renown. I dare say he might, if he had liked, or if he had had the opportunity, have been as gallant a sea-dog as his namesake; but our Ben's lot had been cast on shore, and as he always used to say, whenever any new friend made the obvious remark, he knew more about Chelsea and Battersea than about any other portions of the ocean. It is worthy of notice that in time Ben came to regard this assertion as peculiarly his own, firmly believing that he was the first to discover its excellences as a retort on those amiable people who are always ready to make jokes about other folks' names; and perhaps it was for this reason that he used to describe himself as a fellow that scorned to imitate any one. "I may not be wonderful brilliant," he would say, as often as he got a chance, "but what ability I 've got is all my own, as the lady said when she paid ready money for her chignon."

Ben's position in life was not that of a swell: far from it. Next to his powers of repartee, he prided himself on being a son of toil, and never lost an opportunity of impressing that fact upon his listeners. "I consider," he would say, "that the humble mutton chop earned by the sweat of your brow in your workshop or counting-house, or even as it might be like me, serving, is worth all the teeming basins of mock-turtle soup that form the dinners of the aristocracy. Don't tell me! I don't believe they ever have any appetites, and what 's the value of the best grub in the world if you can't eat it?" This generally succeeded in settling the matter; for, often as the question had been asked, it was still as great a poser as ever, and was regarded by Ben with peculiar complacency, as another proof of his powers of originality. "It isn't every one who 'd have thought of that," he used gleefully to say, when he had brought his query down as a clincher at the end of a long argument upon society in general; "there ain't many as can hold their own with B. B. Let 'em get over me, and there 's only another one for 'em to manage, though I say it myself, and am a modest man."

Though Ben spoke loudly about his being a son of toil, and never lost an opportunity of impressing the fact and its advantages upon his friends and customers, his work was not of a kind to prevent his becoming fat and sleek. It was indeed anything but arduous, his business being that of—I quote from the shop front—an Italian warehouseman and provision merchant, though the people who dealt with Block, and a great many who didn't, not being of a euphemistic turn of mind, were satisfied to call him a chandler's shopkeeper. This used to annoy our hero much, for, as he said one night when Mrs. Jones called in to get a quarter of an ounce of mixed, half a quartern of fourteenpenny, and a dust of rappee and scented Scotch, till Saturday night—Mr. Block was always ready to oblige his neighbours—for, as he said on that occasion, "they think they can vex me by calling this place a chandler's shop, after I 've paid two pun' ten for fresh paint and new canisters, and I do feel it a little at times; but, as I say, I always do my best in the station in which it has pleased Providence to place me; and, besides, Mrs. Jones, though I don't suppose you 've heard it before, for it never struck me till to-day, a rose, or a chandler's shop for the matter of that, by any other name would smell as sweet. There 's nothing else you want to-night—no kippers nor nothing of that sort? That 'll make two-and-nine, then. Good night."

Ben's emporium was in Clerkenwell, in one of its narrowest and most crowded thoroughfares, a street which for its size contained as much poverty, sin, and misery as any in London, perhaps in the world; and here, when Ben was not engaged in studying the waste paper he used to buy at a penny a pound—a favourite amusement of his, by-the-way—he had opportunities of witnessing scenes of an anything but aristocratic description. Still he persevered in his belief that it was better not to be a swell; for, as he argued, it was much nicer to have only one decent meal a week and to enjoy it, than to have thirty about which you felt worse than indifferent. Which was very good on his part, considering that no week passed without his taking his full complement, and with, more often than not, an addendum in the form of a "bit of a snack in between whiles." But then Ben was a son of toil, and enjoyed his food accordingly.

I would not willingly have you understand from this—unless you feel inclined to on your own account—that Ben was a mean selfish fellow who thought only of his own gratification: he was quite the reverse. No one was more ready to talk about assistance in what he considered was a good cause; but he had his crotchets, and was never so delighted as when he was allowed to air them. I verily do believe that at the time he spoke most against swells he admired them most, and no man—certainly no shopkeeper of his class—pitied his poverty-stricken neighbours more, or assisted them in greater degree—with advice. He was a little stout man, about fifty, with a shining bald head, a round red face, and a generally contented air. His wife was very much like him, with the exception, of course, of the bald head, but she balanced this deficiency by an excessive belief that her Ben was certainly the cleverest chap in Clerkenwell, if not in the whole universe. And Ben thought it would be bad policy to discourage the idea.

I have said that the Italian warehouse and provision mart was in Clerkenwell, and in the days of which I write Clerkenwell was in parts even dirtier and more wretched than it is now. The portion with which I have to deal was near Coldbath Fields Prison, and one of Ben Block's principal forms of enjoyment was that afforded by witnessing the prisoners released. He used to go round almost regularly, as nine o'clock struck, leaving the shop in care of the old woman, as he, with a dash of true originality, called her; and I fancy that he would have given up almost anything—always excepting his cosy supper, and his pipe and glass of grog afterwards—in preference to discontinuing this one little enjoyment. For it was to Ben an enjoyment of the keenest possible description, to watch the poor wretches emerging from their prison-house, some to be received by loud and boisterous friends, while others were quite friendless and alone. Ben would notice all who came out, and being of a somewhat romantic turn of mind, he used to puff his morning pipe, and invent histories for those who in any way attracted his attention.

But it was not any of the regular criminals that aroused particular interest in the breast of the chandler's shopkeeper. His pet fancy was to watch for what he called novices in crime, and notice the manner in which they were received by sorrowing relatives, who never came boldly up to the gate like those who were used to the ways of the place, but who hovered about in the distance, nervous and frightened, and made flying visits up whenever a new batch issued from the prison, to hurry back again if their man or boy was not among it, or to get away still faster if he was. Many a time Ben felt quite affected when he had watched a meeting between some weeping mother and her erring son, and he would return home and improve the occasion, as he called it, all day long on this same subject to his customers. Sometimes an evident novice would have nobody to meet him, and very often Ben would follow him for the purpose of giving a little good advice, a stray tract, and, if he felt particularly benevolent, a few coppers. For Ben was a devout believer in tracts. He used to collect large quantities of them, and if no better opportunity presented itself, would use them to wrap up his groceries; by which means he did good by stealth and saved outlay. Opposition tradesmen said it was a mean thing to do, and a swindle on the Society from whom he obtained the tracts; but Ben shook his head, and said they knew nothing of true philanthropy. Perhaps he was right.

It must not be imagined that Mr. Block, shrewd and penetrating as he undoubtedly was, found himself always in the right about released prisoners. Once he had walked nearly the whole length of Saffron Hill with an apparently ingenuous youth, had given him two tracts and a lot of advice, and was about to supplement this with twopence, when he discovered that all his loose money had been abstracted from his waistcoat pocket, that his silk handkerchief and ready reckoner were gone, and that the boy in whom he had taken such an interest was a hardened young thief, who whistled up his companions, and with their assistance hustled poor Ben, knocked his hat over his eyes, pelted him with the garbage of the locality, which at that time ran rather profusely to dead cats and decayed cabbages, and finally raised the neighbourhood on him as a detective, or, as they more politely expressed it, a "plain-clothes pig."

On another occasion he was so impressed by the manner in which a young man plaintively referred to his first departure from the paths of virtue, and the way in which he groaned and called himself a backslider, that Ben's twopence was transformed, as though by magic, into a threepenny-bit; and remembering that he had that morning received a bundle of fresh tracts, he invited his new acquaintance round to the shop, to wait while, in the little back parlour, he hunted out two or three applicable to the condition of a repentant sinner. The sinner took them with many expressions of gratitude; but after he was a few minutes gone, it was found that he had also taken the contents of the till, a bar of soap, a Dutch cheese, and a bladder of lard, all of which he had in a spirit of true delicacy refrained from mentioning. This time Ben consoled himself with the reflection that it was fortunate the till contained nothing but a few halfpence, and that the cheese and lard were both dummies. So, nothing daunted, he still pursued his philanthropic investigations.

Lest any of my readers may think this taste on the part of Mr. Block, in the face of the foregoing and many other checks, was strangely determined, I may as well inform them that in addition to his natural inclinations, Ben received a slight impetus from a small charitable association in the neighbourhood. Prejudiced people said he did well out of it, but with slanderers I have nothing to do, and therefore will not enter on that subject. I may as well, however, remark, that in consideration of his distinguished services as a snatcher of brands from the burning, some old ladies connected with a chapel adjacent purchased all their groceries—that is, the groceries they gave away—from him; and it seems indeed ungrateful that the recipients of this bounty should have grumbled at the quality of the articles—as they most certainly did—for I know the old ladies paid the best prices for them. So Ben waxed fat, and never lost the relish of his tripe and onions or baked jimmies for supper, or the enjoyment of his bacon and eggs, buttered toast, and watercresses for breakfast, in all his misfortunes. But he little knew what was in store for him.

One day Ben was standing in his accustomed morning position opposite the great iron gate which used then to guard the entrance to the Middlesex House of Correction—as though any one would wish to break into such a place!—when he noticed a young man of prepossessing appearance, but with pale and dejected face, walk down from the door, scanning the crowd earnestly as he approached, in the evident hope of recognizing some loved face. But no one was there to greet his return to the haunts of busy men, and for some few moments he stood in the open street, as though uncertain which way to turn. As he lingered near, Ben took a good long look at him, and noticed that his appearance was gentlemanly, that his hands looked white and soft, and that his clothes would have been fashionable had it not been for the wrinkles and creases which, owing to the process they had undergone in prison, made them seem strange and uncomfortable. He gazed piteously up and down, and once or twice Ben thought a look of inquiry was cast at him; but eventually, with a sigh which nearly approached a groan, the released prisoner turned towards Mount Pleasant, and walked slowly and despondently away.

"That should be something in my line," thought Ben; "I 'd better follow him and give him a little consolation. Poor fellow! who knows but what he may be suffering? And though I say it myself, as perhaps oughtn't, I don't know any one more fit for the job than Ben Block. So here goes."

With that our missionary knocked the ashes out of his pipe and followed the object of his solicitude, who had stopped again before reaching the end of the prison wall, as if more doubtful than before which way he should go. As Ben came up briskly the young man looked over his shoulder, and moved away, as though anxious to be undisturbed by a stranger. But this had little effect on Ben, who had his duty to do, and was determined to go through with it. Somehow or the other, though, he felt that the man to whom he was about to speak was not like the majority of those with whom his business—or pleasure, if you prefer so to call it—brought him in contact, and he was almost about to say "Sir," when a recollection of the relative positions in which they stood with regard to the world at large checked him, and placing his hand upon the stranger's shoulder, he commenced, with a preliminary h'm :

"My friend, I was standing at the gate of yonder dreary but necessary institution, when I saw you issue forth, and I feel interested in you. I have here a little composition of my own, which has been found good in similar cases. May I ask if you will read it? and in due course we may receive you at our hall. We meet every Wednesday night. I shall be glad to welcome you as a frightful example, and may promise you sixpence a night and your tea."

The young man listened for a moment after Ben had done, as though expecting to hear more, and then shook his head sadly, while a tear trickled down his nose.

"Sir," said he, "I thank you much for your kind offer, but I am an outcast with whom such as you can have nothing in common. You are a respectable man, while I—while I, once a gentleman of birth and education, stand here a felon and an outcast, without a friend in the world or a penny in my pocket." And he covered his face, while his body was convulsed with the sobs which involuntarily escaped him.

As Ben gazed, he thought, "Now, this is just the sort of fellow I want. If I could only take him up to our hall, and get him to speak, and snivel, and say something about being rescued from continuous crime, it would do me some good, and the old gals would be pleased. I mustn't let him slip.—Come," he continued aloud, "perhaps I can do something for you. At all events, if you'll tell me what it is you want most, I'll see. Perhaps you'd like some breakfast?"

"Generous stranger," replied the unknown, "I hardly know how to thank you sufficiently;" then, after another sob or two, he took out his pocket-handkerchief, wiped his face, and continued, "Excuse this ebullition of weakness, but true kindness is so unexpected that it quite unnerves me. I am indeed thankful for your offer, and will not only accept it, but will do anything in my power to prove my gratitude. I am only in immediate want, for if I can make some little change in my appearance, and subsist for a day or so, I can command remittances from those ingrates who have failed to visit me this morning in the hope that I might do something desperate, and thus rid them of me for ever; or I may return home. Therefore, sir, any service you may render me will be extremely valuable, and I will do anything I can to repay your kindness."

There was, despite the man's woebegone appearance, such an air of superiority about him as he spoke, that Ben felt quite astonished. "I wonder what he's been in quod for," thought he; "something big, I'll warrant; and it'll cause a reg'lar sensation if he won't mind admitting that I saved him. It'll rather put down the opposition to me, anyhow." Then aloud, "What do you wish me to do for you?"

"Well, sir, I know it's a great deal to ask of a complete stranger, especially for one in my situation; but as you have kindly volunteered assistance, I am emboldened. Can you lend me a sovereign for two days? You shall never have cause to regret it, as I faithfully promise not only to repay you, but to put many and many a pound in your way afterwards, without asking you to do anything but what is right. This is Tuesday morning; on Friday, at midday, I will surely be wherever you like to appoint, and will return you the coin."

I must confess that the request considerably staggered Ben, who had bounded the aspirations of his new friend at half-a-crown at the utmost, and had intended to get a good return for even that, and the magnitude of the proposed loan rather nonplussed him. But the earnestness of the intending borrower, to say nothing of his remark that much money would eventually be forthcoming in return for the accommodation, decided him, after a little consideration and more conversation, which was thickly strewn with promises on the part of the freedman, who used his tongue with a dulcet softness quite bewildering. Ben always used to keep one sovereign in his purse, for fear of accidents, as he said, and, with a considerable amount of hesitation, he parted with it, reminding the borrower that Friday, at midday, was the time at which the repayment was due, giving at the same time his address, and watching the coin until it was safely deposited in its new owner's waistcoat pocket.

"Depend upon it, I 'll be sure and be there," said that individual, who seemed to be quite another man as soon as he felt the magic influence of the piece of gold; and, bowing politely, he moved off, and was soon out of sight.

Ben gazed after him for some time, feeling that he had done a foolish thing, and almost afraid the "old woman" would rate him about it. He could see her in the distance looking anxiously from the shop door, for he had been absent considerably longer than usual. He at first determined to say nothing about the loan, but his resolution broke down quite suddenly as soon as he got in—most married men will be quite able to understand this—and he told Mrs. Block all about his morning's adventure. At the outset she seemed cross, but brightened up as a thought struck her:

"Well, if you do lose it, you can tell the old ladies that you did it to oblige them, and you 'll get at least the value of your money in good name, even if they don't give it you back. Besides, I suppose you may get it from the man you lent it to if what you say is right. If he is a gentleman, as you seem to think, he 'll come when he said he would; so let 's wait and see."

You will notice by this that Mrs. Block had a better opinion of her husband than that possessed by most wives. She really did not think he could have done wrong. I wish every wife was like this: mine never thinks I can do right. But no matter; I am writing about Ben Block—not about myself—and scorn to be discursive.

Friday morning came, and towards noon Ben began to feel anxious—that is, he began to feel a little more anxious than he had done before. It was not so much the value of the sovereign, for—if I have not already told you, I ought to have done so—Ben was pretty comfortably off, and kept a very decent sum, part in an old cash-box and part in a stocking, both carefully concealed in his bed-room. He didn 't like banks, as they 'd got what he called "an uncomfortable habit of breaking their customers as well as theirselves," and though he didn't mind Bank of England notes, he preferred gold. It was not, then, so much for the sake of the pound that he felt anxious, more especially as he had seen the old ladies, whose charitable right hand he was, and they had complimented him, and promised to recoup him in the event of loss; but he didn't want to look like a man who had made a mistake, more especially as one or two people in the neighbourhood, who regarded Ben as a time-serving interfering busybody, had got to hear about the transaction, and would be sure to triumph in the event of his coming off second best. So altogether he was rather anxious for the reappearance of the stranger.

For half an hour before the specified time he went repeatedly to the door, and looked up and down to see if any one like the expected guest was coming, but without success; and as twelve o'clock struck he walked behind his counter, feeling much annoyed with himself and with every one else, and cursing himself inwardly in a most irreligious manner for having been so easily led away. I must do him the justice, however, to say that he cursed his friend of Tuesday morning with much greater severity. But he had occasion to regret this precipitancy, for the last stroke of noon had hardly died away when a hansom cab dashed up to the door, and the expected one jumped out, discharged his conveyance, and entered the shop. Ben looked at him in surprise, for both his appearance and manners were much changed for the better. "He looked," said our hero, a short time afterwards, "like a real nobleman." And if massive jewellery and fine-cut clothes constitute nobility, he did. All Ben's notions of getting him up to the hall faded away as he gazed, but he felt quite a glow of conscious charity—mean people would have called it pride—to think he had been useful to such a swell.

"I trust I am not behind time," said the new comer. "I should have been here before, but the cabman mistook the direction. However, permit me to thank you for your kindness the other morning. Here is the sovereign you lent me, and perhaps you will allow me to add another, as token of my gratitude. You may be glad to hear that through your instrumentality I have quite retrieved my position." Ben was, of course, profuse in his congratulations, and reminded the gentleman—for such he evidently was—of his promise to put money in his way.

"Honestly, mind, honestly," concluded Ben; "at all events," said he, dropping his voice, and looking round, "without risk."

"My friend," said the gentleman, "I was about to say that in consideration of your kindness, I could put a good sum—say three or four hundred pounds—in your way without any risk on your part, without indeed any trouble, and in a manner likely to do you good in other directions beside. You will, of course, act fairly and truly by me if I do this—keep my secret, and give me my share of the profits?"

Ben, of course, promised everything that was required, and the stranger then asked what night they could have for a little private conversation, perfectly alone, and free from interruption. After some discussion—they were talking, I may as well inform you, not in the shop, which was being looked after by Mrs. B., but in the back parlour—it was decided that Mr. Edwards—the name Ben's friend had used to introduce himself—should call at nine the following night, when the place being all quiet, the matter could be talked over with the assistance of a glass of grog and a pipe. It was also arranged that Mrs. Ben should be out of the way, for, as the intending visitor said, "It's as well to keep women at a distance when there is business on hand."

All that day and all the next Ben was in such a state of flutter that he hardly knew what he was about. "Three or four hundred pounds," said he, "all at once! Why, here I've been for thirty years getting eight or nine hundred together, after all sorts of dodges and contrivances. Well, it *was* a bit of luck that led me to speak to Edwards. One thing, I can't lose anything, and I'm a quid to the good already." He had no difficulty in getting his wife out of the way, as she was only too glad of the chance of a gossip; and when the appointed time arrived, he was sitting before a bright fire, with a steaming kettle on the hob, a couple of bottles of spirits, pipes, tobacco, and lemons on the table, and, when the expected knock came, a hearty welcome.

Once seated, Edwards mixed himself a steaming jorum of whisky punch, and proceeded direct to business. He said,

"I dare say, now, you wonder what I am, and all about me. Well, to cut the matter short, I'm the only son of a gentleman of property; but being allowed to roam at large in London, I contracted bad habits and worse debts, fell into the company of billiard sharps and blacklegs, and got into trouble generally. In the height of my misfortunes I was tempted and fell. You remember the great diamond robbery, some months back?"—here Ben began to grow still more interested—"well, though I had no hand in it myself, I drew out some plans for the fellows who were concerned, and took charge of the swag. I have it now carefully secreted where no one would ever think of looking for it. Unfortunately, I tried one day to pawn something which one of these fellows had given me, could not account for the way in which I obtained it, and was convicted, under an assumed name. Luckily the article was not part of the proceeds of the recent robbery, and the magistrate dealing with the case summarily, I only got three months for illegal possession. On the morning when I came out, I expected my late companions to meet me, but the cowards came not. Thanks to you, my virtuous resolution succeeded; I managed to reach home, told my father I had been abroad, begged his forgiveness, though he little knew my offences, obtained it, and intend to sin no more."

"But about the diamonds?" asked Ben, all anxiety.

"That's what I'm coming to," replied Edwards. "Now, you're well known as a reputable man, and are credited with having saved many a young fellow from transportation."

Ben was so pleased at the compliment that it never occurred to him to ask his guest how he knew this. Edwards continued.

"So if I bring the things here and leave them with you, there'll be no difficulty in your getting the thousand pounds reward," and Edwards placed in

Ben's hands a printed bill, in which that sum was offered to any one who would return the stolen property to its rightful owners. "There'll be four hundred each for us, and two hundred for a man who must help me to bring down the box. Now, will you do it?"

Of course Ben would do it, and then commenced the deliberations as to where the jewels were to be placed. Block, in a moment of weakness and gratitude, took his new friend up in his bed-room, and showed him a cunningly contrived little well under the head of his bedstead.

"There," said he, "there's where I keep my little store, and there I can keep the box till matters are settled."

Edwards's eyes twinkled strangely when he saw this spot, but Ben was too busy to notice him.

"When will you come, then?" asked he.

A couple of nights off was the time fixed, and the agreement was again entered into for Ben to be alone, his visitor again expressing distrust of women.

"You can tell your wife as much as you like when it is all over, but not before, mind," were the concluding words of Edwards.

"All right," said Ben. And so they parted.

Once again, dreams of the wildest ambition filled the mind of Ben, for—though I grieve to record it, my duty as an honest chronicler is plain—he had, after due consideration, determined to keep the whole thousand pounds for himself.

"For," said he, "they won't dare to say a word about it. I can get rid of my business while things are being arranged, and do as I have so often longed to do—take a little house in my native county."

He beguiled his time with these thoughts, and the occasion being fixed for a meeting-night, he had no trouble in getting rid of Mrs. Block without any explanation beyond that of a desire to stay away from the hall that evening.

"Mind you say I'm very poorly," said he, as she passed out.

How anxiously he listened to every footfall as it came down the street, and how unexpected the knock came at last!—principally because Edwards and his friend drove up in a light cart. Ben was at the door, though, in a moment, and in very little more was busy helping the two men in with a small but heavy case, which was at once deposited on the parlour table. In his haste he was about to take it up in his arms, and convey it to a place of safety, almost before the street door was shut, but "Don't be in such a hurry," said Edwards, and at the same moment a handkerchief was drawn tightly over Ben's mouth, his legs were knocked from under him, his arms were pinioned, and he was tied tightly in his own arm-chair. With the utmost coolness, Edwards poured himself out a glass of whisky, gave his companion one, and then shouldering the box, took it upstairs. In heart-rending agony, Ben heard him busy overhead, and he was hardly sensible of the fact that Edwards's companion, after emptying the little round bowl which contained the loose silver in the shop, was lazily pouring the treacle from its can all over him and the arm-chair of which he was the unfortunate occupant. This sticky task was hardly finished when Edwards came downstairs, and telling Ben he had taken the liberty of keeping what he had found under the bed-head in exchange for the box which he had left there, bade him a cordial good night, and the pair departed, the sound of their wheels being anything but music in the ears of the bound and besmeared treacle merchant.

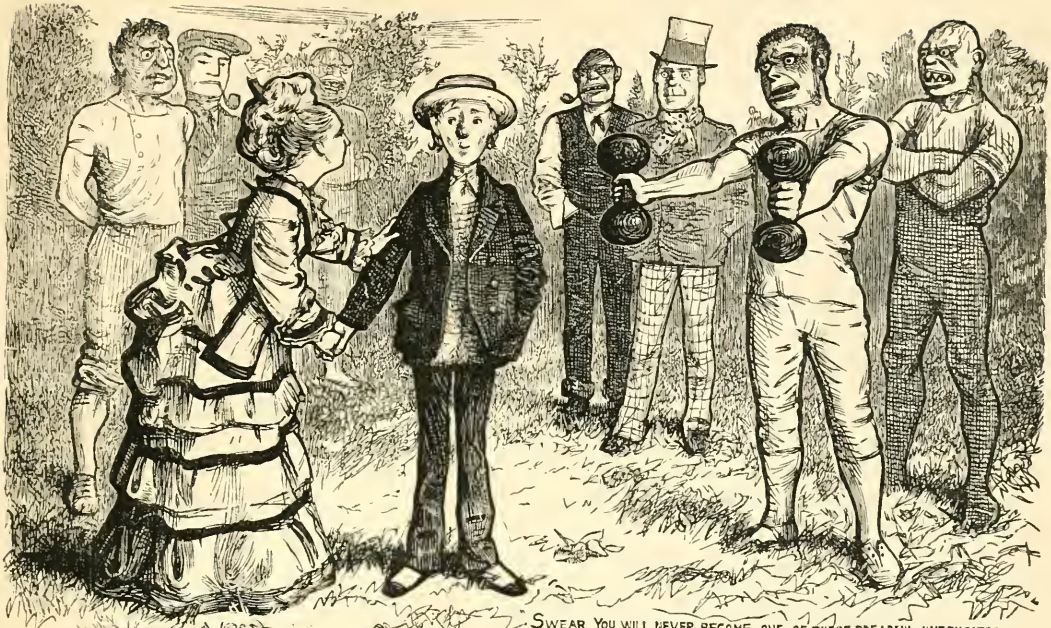
Mrs. Block was a long time in the cold that night before she obtained admittance to her own house.

"Well I never!" said the inspector next morning. "To think *you* should 'a been taken in by 'Nimble Ned, the King of the Magsmen.' You've seen the last of your money, Mr. Block, and I don't think the box of flintstone jewels, heavy though they are, will be found of much value. He must 'a spotted you that morning when he came out for his drag, or p'raps his pals put him on to you. Who knows? You must be very careful now-a-days how you let strangers into your house, and no mistake. Well, now, to think he'd 'a gone on that lay! But he allus was a cute 'un, was Ned."

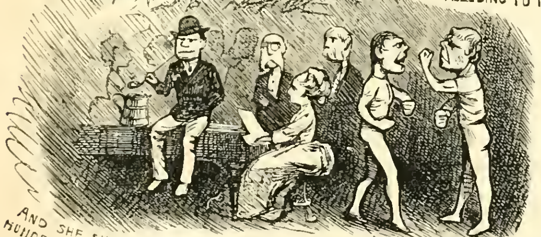
And so ended the greatest calamity that—according to Ben Block's judgment—ever happened in Clerkenwell.

Henry J. M. Sampson.

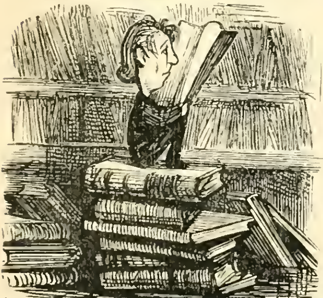
THE YOUNG ATHLETE.



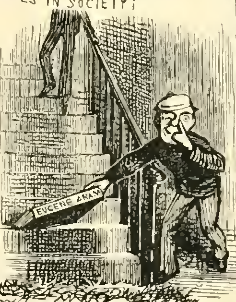
"SWEAR YOU WILL NEVER BECOME ONE OF THESE DREADFUL UNEDUCATED UNIVERSITY PEOPLE, WHO COMMIT MURDERS" SHE EXCLAIMED, ALLUDING TO MR WILKIE COLLINS'S MODERN GENTLEMEN ATHLETES.



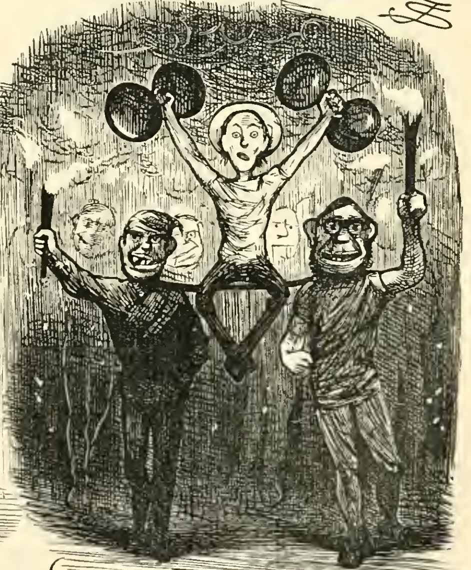
AND SHE SHOWED HIM HOW THEY BACKED THEMSELVES FOR LEVEL HUNDREDS, AND GENERALLY MISBEHAVED THEMSELVES IN SOCIETY;



UNTIL HE TREMBLINGLY CONFESSED THAT ALL THE EVIL IN MAN SPRINGS FROM **NATURE** AND ALL THE GOOD FROM **ART**, AND DETERMINED TO BEGIN GREEK, TO AVOID MURDER.



BUT ONE OF THOSE ATHLETES (WHO HADN'T BEEN TO OXFORD, AND COULD READ) CUNNINGLY LEFT A COPY OF **EUGENE ARAM** IN HIS WAY.



"HULLO!" HE SAID "EDUCATION'S NO USE!" AND THE ATHLETES GOT HIM AFTER ALL.

THE POET'S MISSION.

DOES the poet's lucubration
Bring conviction unto men—
Unreserved corroboration
Waiting humbly on his pen?
Do they think his scintillation
Evidences inspiration?
Could I cherish this opinion
Of poetical dominion,
'T would engender satisfaction
In my unpretending soul,
And proportionate attraction
To existence, as a whole.

While believing in creation
Steeped in melancholy hue,
Can they bear its contemplation
From a comic point of view?
Do they grasp each poet's meaning,
Simultaneously gleaning
(Spite of Reason's mild restrictions)
Wholly opposite convictions?
Or do chronic alternations
Their opinions undergo,
Like the weathercock's gyrations,
Keep them swinging to and fro?
Fancy swaying man's emotion—
Ruling joy's and sorrow's tide!
Fancy—why the very notion
Swells the comic bard with pride!
Such a thought, too oft repeated,
Makes a modest bard conceited;
Makes him feel he's much sublimer
Than a humble comic rhymer!
Viewing thus the situation,
Surely he is bound to say
He's a most sublime creation—
Wonderful in ev'ry way!

So, if jubilation truly
Be a boon that man desires,
Let him give the poet duly
Ev'rything that sage requires;
If he wouldn't suffer blindly
Let him treat the poet kindly,
Or, by way of mild correction,
He (the bard) will spread dejection.
Finishing his exhortation
Thus, the bard, with gleaming eye,
Pauses in anticipation
Of a suitable reply.

JAMES F. SULLIVAN.

THE SOBERWIT CLUB.

THERE was nothing remarkable about our little Club. It had grown up of itself out of a natural liking among a few old men for each other's company. And as we all lived in the City, and had done so the greater part of our lives, it was pleasant to find our way of an evening to the quiet little room, in the rear of the quiet little inn, right under the walls of St. Aloysius the Less, for an hour or two's enjoyment.

The room had a pleasant old-fashioned air, which was in itself a charm. The wainscoting on the walls was almost as dark with age as were the tables, which, in their high polish, had quite a liquid aspect, suggestive of old rum. The mantelpiece rose to within a foot of the low ceiling—with the great beam across it—and the oaken floor inclined downwards to the hearth, which thus became the natural point round which we circled in summer, when it was garnished with green boughs, as well as in winter, when a fire roared up the ample chimney. The cumbrous straight-backed chairs, which could only be pushed, not lifted, might have been uncomfortable to others, but were not so to the white-haired old men who had sat in them so many years, each in his own, and the carved one on the right of the fire for Mr. Josias.

It was but right that he, as President, should enjoy that distinction, especially as the Club had been named after him. The tablet now set up to his memory in the church which, from overshadowing it, kept the club-room in perpetual gloom—is silent on the point; but in bearing witness to the virtues of Josias Soberwit, it might, we felt at the time it was raised, and still feel, have included among them the fact that he had founded the Soberwit Club.

Our beloved founder was alive at the time of which I speak, and indeed participated in and derived no little satisfaction from the incident it is my purpose to relate. He was a good kindly soul, with many virtues—as his tablet truly testifies—but with two Club failings: he had a poor head for drinking, and the smoking of a pipe would make him ill. But neither of these failings did he, in his kindliness and consideration for others, permit to interfere with good fellowship. It was his profound secret—which of course we all knew—that he was in league with the house to serve him with weakened liquors in the disguise of stiff grogs and potent wines, and every night he would go through the form of filling and smoking his own pipe, marked with his own name, and assigned its place of honour at the top of the Club pipe-rack, and it was a point of etiquette that no one should appear to notice that he never lit it.

In their quiet retreat, which, though in the heart of the City, partook, with St. Aloysius the Less, of infinite repose, the Soberwits spent long, dreamy, uneventful hours. Their white heads wagged over the topics of the day, or they listened with inexhaustible patience to the narration of personal incidents with which they had long grown familiar.

When little happens, the ordinary incidents of life assume a preposterous magnitude. Thus it was that one occurrence, far back in the history of the Soberwits, had never ceased to have an interest for them, or to exercise an influence over their gatherings.

Allusion to it usually came about in this way:

The Club wants were attended to by a tall, thin old man, with a stoop in his shoulders, the knots in whose back could be distinctly counted through his coat as he bent to hand a glass or remove a bottle. His face was long and pallid, with deep lines in it; his eyes inflamed, and his general aspect melancholy. In entering and on leaving the room he was wont to heave deep sighs, and in truth the presence of Thaxter—for so they called him—was a disturbing element to the enjoyment of the Soberwits.

That this was distinctly recognized, there was and could be no doubt; but it was a point of courtesy, strictly observed, that no allusion to it should ever be made in the presence of Thaxter.

It would, however, sometimes happen that the lugubrious Thaxter would quit the room, after the discharge of his functions, with a sigh of unwonted fervour—a sigh with all the concentrated significance of a groan. This occurring, Mr. Josias would raise his head, and after taking several deliberate whiffs from his empty pipe, with peculiar gusto, so as to permit of Thaxter's being well out of hearing, would remark:

"Bad! Bad to-night, eh?"

There would be a nod of assent.

"Getting on for the time, perhaps, eh?"

The white heads would concur.

Then, in all probability, Mr. Josias, after a preliminary whiff or two, would proceed:

"Let me see. It was well on into the year, wasn't it? Christmas would be round again, we were remarking, before we knew where we were — eh, Gordle?"

"That 's so, sir," Gordle, the member appealed to, would respond.

"And some of us, maybe, were thinking how often it had come round to us, and under what different circumstances, when all of a sudden that door opens, and in staggers John Thaxter, as white as a ghost, hardly knowing where he was coming, or what he was doing. Ah, Knivett! he was that lost that he dropped into your chair—into your chair, sir!—for all the world as if it had been his own. Such was the lost state of that man."

Knivett remembered the incident. They all remembered the incident. It was so remarkable that Mr. Josias took a good long whiff, and blew out a fierce imaginary cloud, watching in fancy its gradual dispersion, before he resumed.

"It was sitting in that chair that he leant his arms on the table and buried his face, and groaned out, 'Ruined! I 'm a ruined man!' And then, bit by bit, we got out of him the story. How that his partner in the business, the son of the old friend to whom he trusted so much, had proved a scoundrel—how he had speculated with the money of the firm—how his speculations had turned out failures—how, finding this, he had gathered up the wreck of all, and fled. Worst of all, how he had made John Thaxter's daughter Rosy—the apple of his eye—the companion of his flight: so leaving him alone in his beggary and despair."

"A sad tale—a sad, sad tale, sir!" Gordle would chime in.

"We know what happened then," the President would continue, in spite of their knowing it, and just as they were in the habit of telling one another other long stories, in spite of their knowing *them*. "John Thaxter had not overstated it. He *was* a ruined man. He would have ended his days in a prison but for the friends who helped him, and sheltered him, and did what they could to smooth the path he had to tread."

Mr. Josias keeps to himself the part he played in all this; but they know his generous heart and his open hand, and never question but what John Thaxter has reason to know it too.

"It 's hard," he goes on, "to find just the opening one would like for a man suddenly down in the world. I 'm not sure that it isn't about the hardest thing you can have to do. Besides, John Thaxter was stunned by his fall. It left him unlike himself. But for this, you understand, he might have picked himself up, righted himself, and perhaps got back into the old groove—who knows?"

"Ha! who, indeed?" Knivett would exclaim.

"My opinion is," Mr. Josias would continue, with the air of a man struck with a discovery of some magnitude, "that it was all owing to the girl, gentlemen: it was Rosy's going broke his heart. Why, bless you, she was the sunshine of that man's life. I don't suppose he ever took a step in the business that he didn't put it to himself in this way, 'It 'll be the better for Little Rosy, God bless her!' And she was always Little Rosy to him. He couldn't see that she was any more than the child of his heart, just the same as ever; and there she goes, and flings herself away on the man that 's ruined him, and poor old John 's left in his misery and his loneliness. Is it to be wondered at that he breaks up, and is never any more the man he was?"

They agree that it is not to be wondered at: quite the contrary.

"For all that," says Mr. Josias, "I did *not* expect that he would have come down quite so low, or been quite so humbled. I declare to you it gave me a turn I shall never forget, when, that night we all remember, he came into this room, and stood there—close behind you, Snowder—with his poor shaky fingers nervous about his throat, trying to help clear it of the choky feeling that would not let him speak. 'Sit down, John,' says I, 'there 's the old seat, man: sit down.' 'No, never no more,' he answered, the tears gathering in his eyes. 'I 'm not fit to mix with the like of you. I 'm no companion for well-to-do men with brains in their heads. I 'm the fool that trusted—his friend—and—his own child! A fool 's not fit'—— 'Nonsense, John,' we said; 'you 'll be one among us all the same.' 'Yes,' he cried out eagerly, 'one among you, if you 'll let me be; one to serve and wait upon you, and so help to eke out a living while I 've the need of it.' Well, we know how we wouldn't hear of this, and told him so, and how he urged his point, and thought more and more of it, until at last it came about that John Thaxter was waiter to his own Club, and content to serve those with whom he had associated. No wonder he 's low at times, when the thought of it comes over him."

Little wonder, truly; and perhaps as little that lowness of spirits was not the only point about John Thaxter in his serving capacity, which was a little trying to the Soberwits. It was doubtless in the nature of things—at least in Mr. Josias' mind—that during the twenty years which had passed since his calamity, their ancient servitor should have developed a steady tendency to acerbity. It was natural that he should have become gruff and short in speech, querulous in temper, jealous over trifles, and with an abnormally developed tendency to irritation.

That the Soberwits should have been other than conscious of this was impossible, but they were too loyal to their old friend, and sympathized too deeply with him in his misfortunes, ever to allude to it even among themselves.

It was especially not pleasant when intended tendernesses were resented as insults.

"John," the President would say, "a little hot water, when you are coming up : no hurry."

John would shuffle off, white with resentment.

"No hurry? I 'm too old to be hurried, am I?" he would look. "A younger man 's waiting for my place, I s'pose. He 's welcome to it, I 'm sure; but why can't they say it in so many words?"

And the hot water would be brought with startling and emphatic promptness.

Or again, some article required by a member would occasionally be forgotten.

"No matter; 't is not of the slightest consequence," he would say.

"Pardon me, sir," John would retort, "it was of consequence when I was a member, and it 's of consequence now. I know the ways of the Club, and what the members have a right to expect. I *know* my duty, and I hope I shall always try to do it."

In this way courteous considerations for him became as barbed arrows to John's morbid sensitiveness, while, of course, a Soberwit would no more have ventured to find fault with anything than to have openly insulted Mr. Josias himself.

In the arrangements between the Club and their poor serving brother there was one special article or condition. It had been imposed by the Club, assented to with reluctance, but always sternly enforced. Every year, for twenty years, when Christmas Eve came round, it found John Thaxter restored to his old position as member of the Club. On Christmas Eve he occupied his own seat, ordered his own grog—paying for it out of a sovereign presented to him for the express purpose—smoked his own long pipe with his name on it, as written by himself twenty years before, and had absolute right and title to help himself out of the Club silver snuff-box as often as the enjoyment of that luxury was agreeable to himself. In brief, for this one evening of the year, every privilege pertaining to a Soberwit reverted to poor John, including that of addressing his fellow-members familiarly by name and omitting the respectful "Sir," except in reference to the President—an arrangement which long habit made it exceedingly difficult for him to avail himself of.

The twentieth of these Christmas Eves had come round, and the Club had assembled in its customary strength. Mr. Josias occupied his seat at the head of the long table, and every seat round it was filled, including that of poor John Thaxter, who looked thinner and more wan than usual, yet bore himself bravely, with a due sense of the honour he had lived to enjoy once more. As marking the special nature of the evening, the President had undertaken the brewing of a bowl of punch. The Club bowl was before him, the Grand High Lemon-Peeler had performed his functions to a nicety; the Custodian of the Copper Kettle had attended with a due sense of its importance to the boiling of the water; His Excellency the Steward of the Sugar-Bowl had not been found wanting, while the Worshipful the Club Butler had been in due readiness with a bottle of his noblest spirits. Under these favouring circumstances a bowl of punch had been obtained, hot, strong, and insinuating, the aroma of which fairly pervaded the room as Mr. Josias stirred it round and round with the massive ladle, in the bottom of which glittered a two-guinea piece of the reign of his Majesty George II.

The filling of the glasses, arranged in glittering phalanx beside the bowl, was the next business ; and as he performed it with scrupulous care, so that no drop of the precious liquid should be wasted, Mr. Josias revolved in what terms he should propose the one toast of the evening—"The Soberwit Club."

It was a critical moment, and all eyes were fixed upon the bowl.

It was an absorbing moment, and the little Club, quiet and contained within itself, had momentarily lost sight of the outer world, its turmoil and its trouble, when a sound of voices broke the stillness,—a sound of voices in stormy altercation.

"Bless me!" cried the President, "I fancy that"——

Before he could describe the impression on his fancy, the door of the room burst open, and several members rose from their seats, gazing out into the gloom of the passage beyond.

"I tell you," cried a voice outside, "that it is a private club"——

Some half-articulate, half-hysterical reply was given, and there burst from the gloom into the light the figure of a young girl—a slight, almost childish figure, with long tangled hair swathing about a fair and wildly excited face.

As this apparition burst into the room, John Thaxter rose, gave one shrill cry, and clasped his hands before his eyes, as if to shut out some horrible object.

"Take her away!" he gasped, "take her away!"

"No, no!" cried the young girl, making towards him.

"Away with her, I say: I will not see her. She married him! She was my ruin!"

By this time hands were laid on the girl's arm to remove her ; but she shook them off.

"Oh! hear me," she pleaded, throwing herself at John's knees, and grasping his hands. "Hear me, if only for a minute! It is Rosy, little Rosy—oh! you will not turn me away!"

He tore his hands from his eyes, and raised one as if to strike her.

"How dare you come here? How dare you"——he exclaimed.

The sentence was not finished, and the uplifted hand was drawn back with a start. The eyes that looked into the face of the young girl suddenly widened with amazement, and an incredulous expression came into the man's thin face.

"You are not—not my child?" he gasped.

"No!"

"Not Rosy!—ah, no ; I had forgot. 'T is twenty years ago. You are"——

"Your grandchild—Little Rosy!"

With a sudden impulse of affection he threw his arms about her: then as suddenly withdrew them, and rose up defiantly.

"Her child—*his* child! Never!" he burst out. "What are you to me? Why do you come whining here, slavering here? I see it. 'T is a trick of theirs to make their peace with me. Never! Never!"

Fiercely impetuous, he thrust back his chair, and made to go, with loathing in his very movements, and as if animated only by a desire to escape from the sobbing child.

"Let me speak, grandfather: only let me speak," her sweet lips pleaded. "I have no one in the world but you. No one in the wide world."

The pleading voice was touching beyond expression, but it derived added effect from the simple action which accompanied it. As she knelt, the child spread out her palms, and tears dropped glistening upon her dress. It was black. The mute confirmation of her words it afforded touched the old man's heart.

He hesitated.

"Your—your mother?" he faltered.

"Dear, dear mother is dead."

"And—*he?*"

She rose from her knees and moved toward him.

"Dead!"

As the word broke in a gasp from her lips, she threw herself upon the old man's breast, and was clasped to it in a long embrace.

Never had scene so striking and so incredible been enacted in the Soberwit Club. The members looked on in blank amazement. The punch cooled. No one gave a thought to anything save the long streaming gold of the fair young head, over which the white head of the old man bent in a passionate outburst of affection. For some moments there was a dead silence in the room. Then John Thaxter rose, and in broken accents apologized for the interruption he had so unwittingly caused.

"But you know my story," he said, "and I—I haven't heard a word of love for twenty years; and I 'd got hard and peevish—vicious, maybe—and I didn't believe I could have shed a tear for forty pound. But I loved her so, my Rosy, my poor lost Rosy! and now that she 's come to life again, and without the fault that made me try to hate her, why, I—I"——

But here he fairly broke down again, and it was only some whispered suggestion from the child—though for that matter she was almost a woman—that they should leave the company, that brought him to himself.

"Yes, Rosy," he said—"yes, I can leave, for—thanks to these good friends here—I am a gentleman to-night. I 'm one of them: just as in the old time. One of them, Rosy."

The exulting glance was reflected in the girl's bright laughing eyes.

"And shall be, in time to come, grandpa dear," she whispered. "You are no longer poor. Your long years of privation are over. The fortune made out of the ruin of your means is mine—and yours. Whose should it be but yours?"

The amazing prospect thus suddenly unfolded to him of the sudden realization of a future repeating the past in love and affluence, had almost proved too much for poor John Thaxter. His happiness was too great. He could not speak. Only tears trickled silently over his worn cheeks, and his lips moved inarticulately. They began to fear the effects of this too sudden joy; but Rosy soothed and calmed him, and in time he rose, and clinging to her hand as if in his hold upon that depended his hold on everything that was precious in life, tottered from the room, too much overcome to say one word of all that there was in his heart to utter.

And it was some time before the wonder of all this had subsided enough for those left behind to give heed to the stern duties of the anniversary. But when at length Mr. Josias *did* give "The Soberwit Club: success to it and to its members, not forgetting poor John Thaxter!" a cheer burst forth, such as had never yet rung through that ancient chamber. And from that night forth there was seldom a vacant place at the board, but a beaming, courteous, affable old man nightly occupied the chair which was his own twenty years before; punctual in coming, and punctual in leaving, under the pleasantest of all pleasant pretexts, namely, that he was the slave of a hard and inexorable tyrant, who made his life a burden, and was embittering the remnant of his days. To affect a mighty awe of this tyrant: to feign constant alarm, lest by overstaying his appointed time a second, or compromising himself in any way, would expose him to dire pains and penalties, was his special delight. Over this pretext he would chuckle till the tears gathered in his eyes; and well might he do so. The tyrant's name was Rosy.

WILLIAM SAWYER.

MY PILGRIMAGE.

COME—if life's troubles wring your breast,
My pilgrimage will bring you balm!
Exchange for Fleet Street's loud unrest,
The Temple's calm.

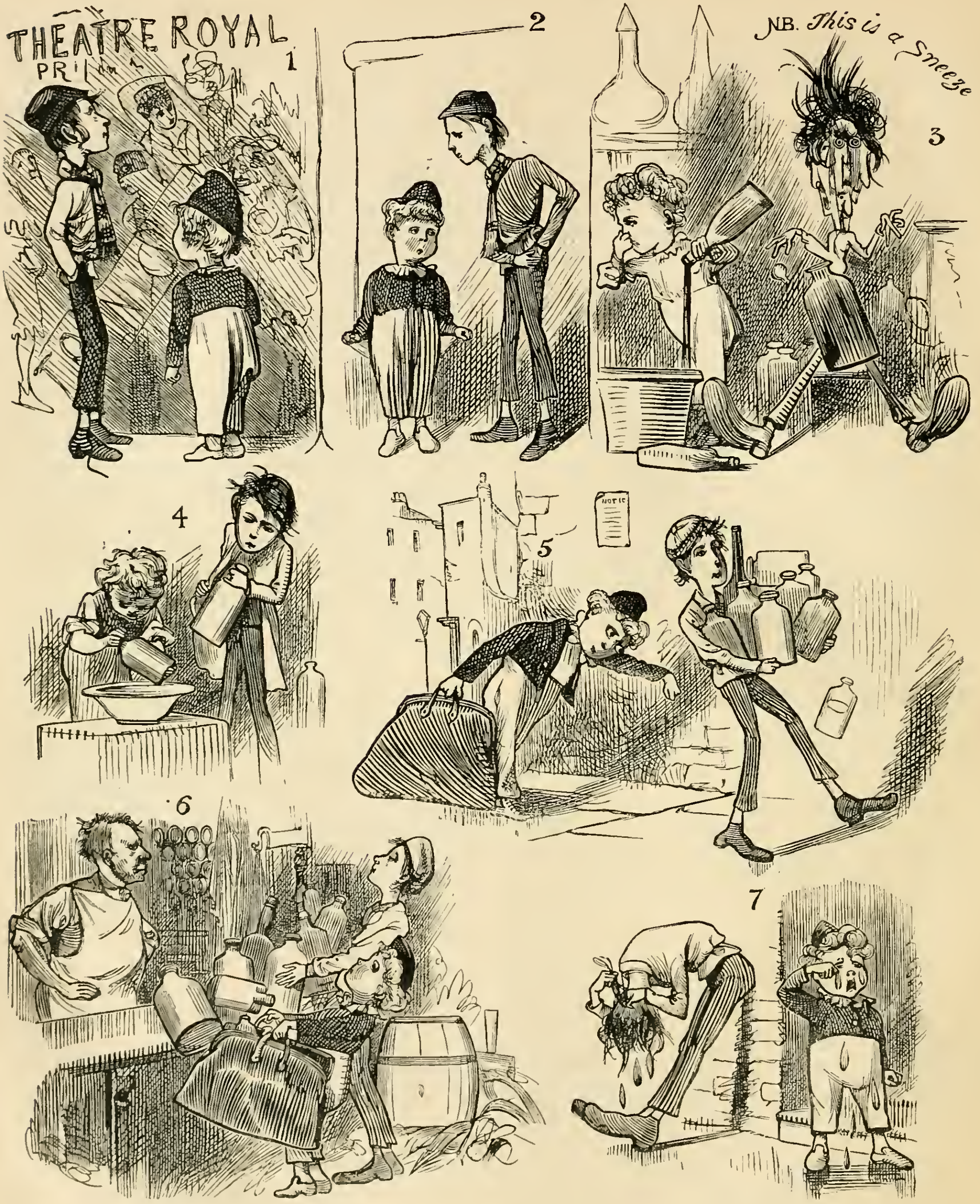
Here is a spot of hallowed ground:
No violets the air perfume,
But what sweet memories surround
Our Goldsmith's tomb!

You scarcely hear the stir of life
Here by the poet's lowly bed,
And seem as far removed from strife,
As is the dead!

See! there before you is the stone:
"Here lies," one from the legend gleans,
"Oliver Goldsmith."—That alone—
How much it means!

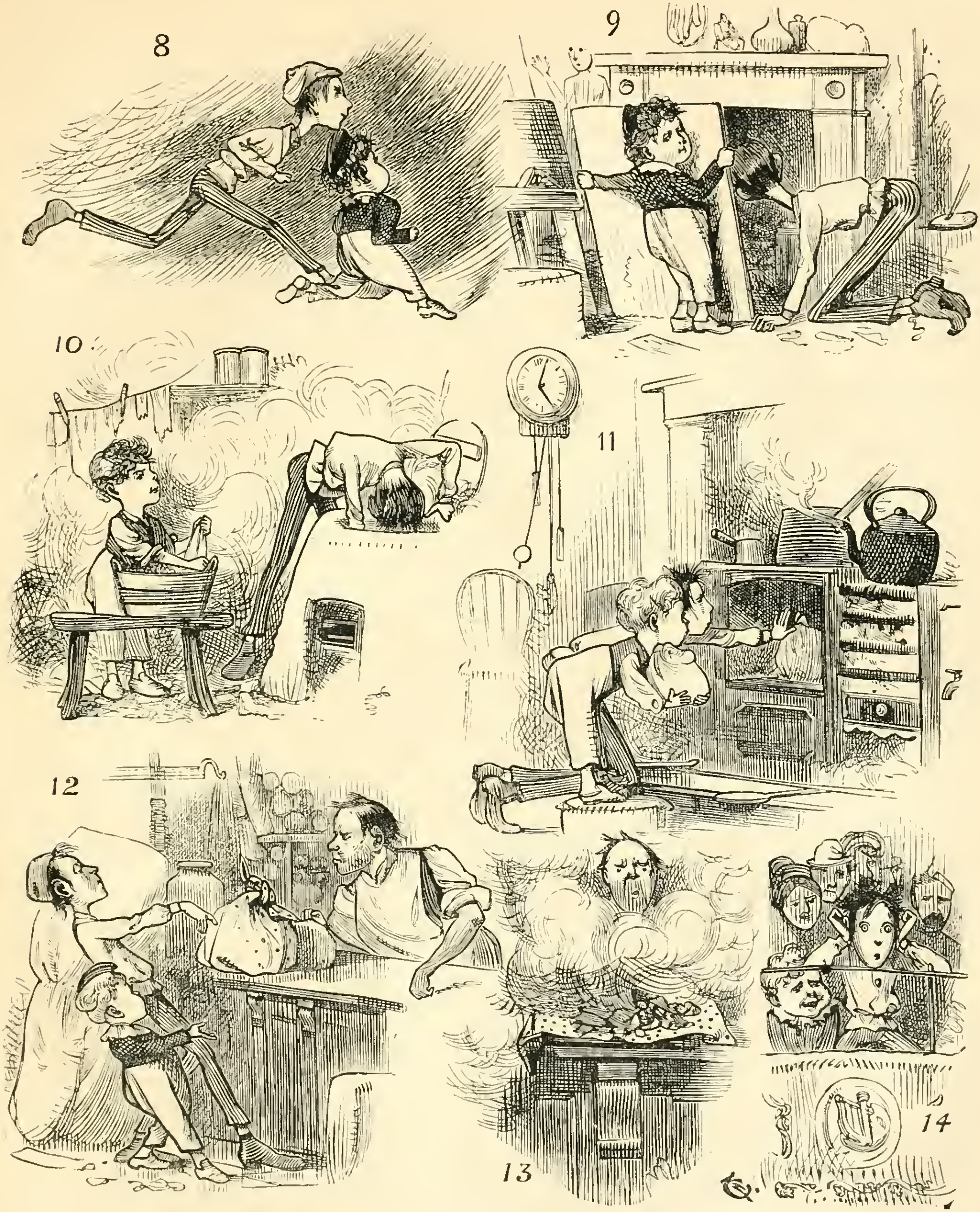
T. H.

RAISING THE WIND: A Comedy of several Acts.



1. Harry and Tommy gaze wistfully upon the gorgeous advertisement of a Christmas pantomime.
2. A trifling obstacle to their enjoyment of a front stall in the gallery, however, is an empty pocket.
3. An idea! Harry's father is a chemist; they surreptitiously purloin a bottle or two, empty out the contents,
4. And after carefully washing the same,
5. Armed with a dozen or two,
6. They wait upon Mr. Grub, the bone, rag, and bottle merchant, with a view to financial transactions.
7. Horror! rage! despair! grief! Result of before-mentioned financial transaction—3*d.*!

RAISING THE WIND: *A Comedy of several Acts.*



8. Happy thought again. Away!
9. Tommy's father is an artist. Painting rags might possibly be discovered.
10. White rags, however, being of greater value, gigantic cleansing operations are resorted to. But, by-the-bye, how to dry them?
11. Brilliant suggestion—the oven!
12. "There! how much for that lot?"
13. H. and T.'s proceedings with regard to the hot moist rags, however, do not seem calculated to raise those gentlemen in Mr. G.'s esteam.
14. Ultimate satisfaction. *Haussez le rideau.*

POLLY'S WINGS.

"AND how finds you youselfs to-day, *chère petite?*"

"Oh, Mr. Jarvis, I 'm so glad you 're come! I 'm drefful tired out of being alone; and Madam Braser, she 's a-gone, oh, ever so far! as she 'ad a bit of work to carry 'ome. Oh, my! Mr. Jarvis, wot stunnin' flowers! Wherever did you git 'em? and wot d' ye call 'em?"

"Dey is *charmante*—is dey not, Marie?—bee-eu-teeful! *Tiens!* dis leetle *fleur* wis de *couleur* like de sky—not de Eenglish sky, but dat of *la belle France*—dis is vot you calls 'don't-forgets.' And dis is '*soucis*'—dat is more Eenglish; we have not so moche cares in my contrey. And dese—vat you calls dem?"

"Oh, them 's daisies. I knows them, as is more common. I 've seen 'em on the graves in some of the churchyards."

"Dey is Marguerites—de *fleurs* of the childs—as dey grow every, everywheres! But *voila, ma chere!* here is one, two orange for you leetle mouf—so dry and tursty."

The child clutched at the fruit with all the avidity of fever, and buried her parched lips in the cool juice, as a gasping bird that had been deprived of water might plunge its quivering beak into a ripe grape. M. Gervais spread the mottled blue cotton handkerchief which had held the fruit carefully over his knees, and watched the child's rapturous enjoyment with great satisfaction.

M. Gervais—or, as Polly translated and Anglicised his name, Mr. Jarvis—was a little old man who had evidently never been a very large specimen of humanity, and, like most Frenchmen of his type, he had withered up into a kind of little dry stick, till the very-carefully-preserved clothes he wore, which evidently dated back to some long, long-past season of prosperity, sat very easily, even though still somewhat jauntily, on his spare small frame. Poverty, no doubt, had been his inheritance for many a long day; but that gaunt wolf, which not only devours the health and strength, but the very spirit and mind of our English poor, had been as yet kept gallantly at bay by our little Frenchman. Half starved he might be, in spite of his most ingenious broths and stew of odds, ends, and refuse, which our poor folks would have called not fit for a dog; but quelled in spirit he had never been. He brushed, and rubbed, and darned, and patched his threadbare garments, and polished and cleaned his worn shoes, with an indomitable energy, and warbled his little *chansons* merrily all the time. He had, like many others besides, his own compatriots, come over to "*perfide Albion*" as to an endless El Dorado, which it was lawful for the Egyptians to spoil. But he had been disenchanted like every one else, and had long accepted his fate with philosophy, hoping still that some day the fickle goddess would send him the means to go back to his beloved France, and meanwhile eking out as well as he could the scanty means he earned so hardly. After trying several ways of gaining a livelihood, he had finally settled down as "Professor of Dancing" in London, where his few—very few—pupils consisted of about three children of very poor but ambitious small tradespeople, and a few still poorer girls who were aspiring to become "supers" at the Christmas pantomimes. It was dreary work, and nothing but an unquenchable spirit of hope, and an unlimited patience, could have reconciled him to the bare though airy garret which constituted his "apartment, dancing *salon*, and all," and to his still more trying pupils. The poor girls who were training for the stage were his favourite and most promising *élèves;* although, I am sure, if we could have peeped into his skinny *port-monnaie*, we should have discovered that at least half paid nothing, and the moiety but little. In fact, if one could call anything "paying" in such a mere pittance, the three most troublesome of all were alone even slightly remunerative.

But what "Mr. Jarvis" endured to earn this scanty mite was only known to himself. Miss Baggs, the eldest hope of the landlord of the gin palace at the corner of the street, at first utterly rebelled at being taught "along of them riff-raff," and only continued a pupil on condition that she had a private lesson first on the same terms, and "assisted" afterwards with the mob in order to learn the figures. 'Tilda Smith sniffed contemptuously, and dragged away the ragged loose flounces of her tawdry dyed silk, whenever "them balley gals" came near her, and was majestically deaf to their whisper of "coals and greens." The third votary of Terpsichore was a mysterious girl of elephantine proportions, who rejoiced in a perpetual cold, and who turned sulky as soon as the business began. She always wore a dress of very shiny crackly black silk, and black gloves three sizes too big for her; and being popularly supposed to be the daughter of a cheap undertaker, was unanimously christened "Coffins."

And over these varied and unruly subjects M. Gervais ruled not untroubled, but very successfully on the whole, by the help of his invincible good humour and hope of better days. But after his daily struggle with his disorderly troop was over, his steps generally towards evening bent to the little dull room at the top of a tall house, where lay the little girl beside whose couch he is now sitting.

And her story is as commonplace as his, though very sad, and it touches the tender heart of the little Frenchman with an infinite pity and sorrow. Her father had been a stage carpenter at one of the theatres, and being a very ingenious handy man, had, in earlier days, earned very good wages; and Polly had been as lively and happy a little soul as any poor child, born in the very heart of London, and having streets for green fields, and chimney-pots for trees, can be. But the thrifty mother had died young, and Polly, left to her own devices, had sat on cold door-steps and in damp places, till her more carefully reared little body fell a victim to a violent chill, that rendered one leg entirely useless for life.

Then, just when good living and care were most needed, came an awful time, when the poor carpenter was suddenly stricken down with English cholera, and died, leaving the helpless little one to the chance care of strangers.

But, fortunately for poor little Polly Blake, two or three kind hearts were touched with pity for her forlorn state, and with that real brotherly love which is not in our world the same as that termed "Christianity," but which is, nevertheless, if we may Germanically coin a word, "Christlikeness," her *neighbours* took her to their hearts and homes, which, if literally small and narrow, were, in a clearer light than ours, palaces and mansions.

Madam Braser — *i.e.*, Madame Brasseur — the little Frenchwoman, whose tiny garret was only enough for her own wants, managed to screen off a corner and improvise a bed for the "*pauvre petite*," giving up the sole pillow, the only luxury of her modest home, to the little weary head, and during the scanty spaces of her leisure tending and nursing the feeble little one with almost a mother's love, and quite maternal skill. And the other neighbours were all truly neighbours in the divine sense, which shall one day rank them all—poor, shiftless, thoughtless, untaught Bohemians as they might be—as true pupils in the great school which had a poor Man as the greatest Teacher the world ever saw. And these all shortened their daily wants, lessened their scanty necessaries (it would be insulting to call them *comforts*), for the sake of the crippled little life, that could not be a long one. And when little Bohm, the bassoon at the ——, sent up his favourite festive supper of mussels to the "*kleine kind*" who was so "*kranke*," it was accepted with as much joy as it was freely given. For poor little Polly had never known enough food to have been able to be dainty: dry bread had been such ambrosia that even the least "relish," as she called it, added the nectar that roused the rapidly failing appetite. But the little feeble form was now condemned from physical weakness to entire rest on the small, carefully-made couch, which was no longer soft to the aching limbs that at first found such rest there.

"But, my child," said good M. Gervais, "where is *chère* Madame Brasseur?"

"She 's gone to see some lady as has promised to 'elp her," replied Polly, feebly sucking the last drops out of her Hesperidian fruit. "She says she wants to go back to her own country, as is more cheerful by 'arf nor this. And it *must* be better if they don't 'ave no fogs there."

"But, my little one, she will not leafs you behind?" inquired M. Gervais, anxiously, laying his little brown hard hand on the skeleton arm of the child.

"P'r'aps she mayn't go till I 've got my wings," said Polly, smiling, "and then I shall fly arter her."

"Bah! you foolishe *petite*," replied M. Gervais, smiling also, but shrugging his shoulders. "Veengs! vat cood you vith veengs?"

"I could fly over the great big sea!" answered the child, eagerly—"fly over the sea! Oh! if I had only wings, I know as I could manage 'em. I 've lay 'ere and watched the flies in the winder so often."

"But you not fly above the big sea, *ma petite;* your leetle veengs vill grow, ah, so *fatigué comme* de leetle birds of passage, and you vill fall."

"No, I shan't," replied Polly, winking. "I shall flap 'em so, and keep on a-flyin'!" And, suiting the action to the words, she waved her thin weak arms, and then dropped them wearily on the bed again.

"Pa always said I should fly," she resumed, after awhile, as if talking to herself. "Pa was so clever —and he made all the fairies fly in the pantomime, and he always promised I should, too. Milly Baker used to say she were so sleepy she allus dozed off when she were on the cloud, and then waked up suddent, and thort she were a-fallin'—but then she 's so silly. Pa 'd soon 'ave made me fly, *I* know. I heard Mossir Bracer a-tellin' Madam t' other day about some man as could fly up in the air. I know *I* could, if Pa could only ha' helped me, for I 'm very light."

"*Me voila, chère ange*," cried a little high-toned voice at the door, "you haves miss your Armande. *N'importe.* I have com to last, and we goes nex week. *Cher* M. Gervaise, we returns to *nos pays. Ciel*—'t is so good to goes back to our sun's shines, our *campagne*, our *joie*, from this *triste serieuse Angleterre*."

M. Gervais congratulated the little woman heartily, and then inquired in a low voice if she really could manage to take the little one with her.

"*Mais, oui*," cried Madame Brasseur, eagerly. "Thinks you I liefs the *pauvre petite* wizout care or food? I am not so English as zat, dough I live here tree, four years."

She then explained to the little Frenchman, in their own expressive tongue, that she and Adolph— "for Adolph has the tender good heart—ah, *mon Dieu!* so good, so kind! and Adolph is so cherished by his master"—but Adolph said, "See, my angel, we have been in this dreary Albion three, four years, and we are poor—more poor than in France; and they are so cold, the people, and the weather not *sympathique*—ah, *ciel!*—not *sympathique* at all. Let us return, *ma petite*—let us go to our dear France, and be happy."

So Adolph, who is so cherished by his master at the restaurant, and so admired, *mais*, so admired, has made friends, and his friends have given him a small *douceur* to help him back to *la belle France*, for they see Adolph is pining for his country; and a good lady, for whom Adolph has sometimes waited to her table, has sent for Madame, and gave her money enough to take back her and the child too. And with the skies and the balmy airs of *la belle France*, the *mignonne* will soon be better. And Armande leaves off to have a hearty cry, and then goes to put on the soup-pot, while M. Gervais takes his leave, never sighing or looking downcast till after he has closed the door.

"And shall I fly there arter all, madam?" asks Polly, dreamily watching Madame at her occupation. "Pa always said I should fly, you know, and I was to have a white gownd with gold spangles, and such splendacious coloured wings, with gold stars—like a real fairy, you know."

"No, my little one," replies Madame, still busy over her cookery, "you will not need to tire your dear little self. The ship will spread out its strong white wings, and carry you safe over the sea to where the sun always shines. And it is so gay there, so cheerful. We may have so small a room as this, but we shall take our chair and sit on the *pavé* in the street, and see all the people go by, all the carriages and the fine-dressed people. Such toilettes, *ah, mais, c'est magnifique!* And we will have our coffee, and we will be so happy!"

And so she rattles gaily on, while the little girl lies back, trying to realize all her descriptions, but falling back on the old dreamy longing, the vision of that blighted fading life, which has been so tied down to the weary couch of helplessness and pain.

The kindly Frenchwoman brings her a cup of *bouillon*, but the sickly appetite cannot take more than a spoonful; and turning away, the little one lays her heavy head down, saying she is not hungry.

"Nay, then, my little one," says Madame, gently lifting her up, "here is some stuff the good doctor has sent to rub in your chest, to ease your sad, sad cough; and then, if you will be good, and let me rub it in, you shall have some *tisane*—oh! so nice, —made from the sweet lime-flowers."

"I am so tired, I want to go to sleep," murmured Polly. "Don't rub it in to-night."

"But the doctor said it must be done," said Madame. "*Tenez, chère petite ange*, it will make the wings grow!"

"Will it?" said Polly, eagerly, rousing herself and feebly trying to sit up. "Oh! rub away, then, and give us a double dose: perhaps us can feel 'em by morning."

The kind little woman quietly and tenderly rubbed the skinny shoulders and frail chest, and then laid down the little feeble form again with a kiss.

"Sleep, *ma chèrie*," said she, "and in the morning we will look to find the feathers."

And the dim eyes closed with that pleasant thought, and sleep came down like the blessed angel of comfort that it is, and gathered the little one to its downy breast like a half-fledged bird in the nest.

Next morning the alert little Frenchwoman was up and busy with her humble *ménage*, although her sleep had been incessantly broken by the feverish restlessness of the sick child. Towards morning, however, the little one had wakened and began to fidget about in her bed.

"What is it, *petite?*" asked Madame. "Are you thirsty? Will you have some *tisane?*"

"No," replied Polly, "'t ain't that; but I were feelin' for my wings, but they ain't growed yet."

"Never mind, my child," replied Madame, soothingly, as the little weak voice ended in a disappointed sob; "the feathers will not grow in one day, even for the little birds. Courage! perhaps they will be here to-morrow."

In the evening, after his toilsome day's work was over, M. Gervais came in to ask after "*la petite*." But as she was then dozing more quietly than she had been all day, he drew his chair to the fireside, and held a low conversation with Madame in their native language, which we render in English for convenience sake.

"You say you have money, my good madame, to take the little one with you. But there will be many small expenses, which, as an old friend of the child's, I hope you will permit me to pay. I have a little sum here—it is but little—but in Madame's careful hands it will be double."

The generous old man did not confess it, but, in order to obtain it, he had accepted an engagement he had till now utterly refused. For in taking the disagreeable, troublesome, small brother and sister of Miss Baggs at a quarter of the small pittance their grasping father allowed for that august damsel, he had literally sold himself to three months' slavery, that the little stranger orphan might have better food.

"And see," said Madame, almost tearfully, "how good is every one even in this cold country! So many, so many have given me old dresses, old cloaks, old hats, for the *chère ange*, that she will have a *trousseau*—a veritable *trousseau! Pauvre petite!* if she can only live to get to France—our France—she will not want her wings that she is always dreaming of."

And so they sat and planned kind things, these two good souls; and by-and-bye Adolph came in to arrange ways and means with his happy, busy wife. The little sleeper still lies in such hushed repose that the two men are as noiseless as the woman.

They sit whispering over the frugal handful of fire, while Madame silently places the humble supper on the table. Presently, a low moan and a restless movement in the little bed call her attention, and she steals up quietly, shading the candle in her hand. Polly's eyes are wide open, and she smiles, as she says in her little weak voice:

"Madam, the feathers are come—oh, so white! and I can feel my wings getting, oh, so much bigger!"

There is that in the little grey pinched face that makes Madame silently raise the drooping head. A few moments, a little sigh, and then, as she lays back the quiet head on the pillow, M. Gervais says reverently,

"The wings are full-grown now, and our little bird is gone home!"

FRANCES FREELING BRODERIP.

A YANKEE STORY.

I KNEW by the sympathetic glow upon his bald head; I knew by the thoughtful look upon his face; I knew by the emotional flush upon the strawberry on the end of the old free-liver's nose, that Simon Bean's memory was busy with the olden time. And so I prepared to leave, because all these were symptoms of a reminiscence—signs that he was going to be delivered of another of his tiresome personal experiences. But I was too slow; he got the start of me. As nearly as I can recollect, the infliction was couched in the following language:

"We were all boys then, and didn't have no troubles, and didn't worry about nothing, only how to shirk school and keep up a revivin' state of devilment all the time. Thish yar Jim Wolf I was talking about was the 'prentice, and he was the best-hearted feller, he was, and the most forgivin' and onselfish I ever see—well, there couldn't be a bullier boy than what he was, take him how you would, and sorry enough I was when I see him for the last time.

"Me and Harry was always pestering him, and plastering hoss-bills on his back, and putting bumble-bees in his bed, and so on; and sometimes we'd crowd in and bunk with him, not'thstanding his growling, and then we'd let on to get mad and fight acrost him, so as to keep him stirred up like. He was nineteen, he was, and long and lank and bashful, and we was fifteen and sixteen, and tolerably lazy and worthless.

"So that night, you know, that my sister Mary gave the candy-pullin', they started us off to bed early, so as the comp'ny could have full swing, and we run in on Jim to have some fun.

"Our winder looked out on to the roof of the kitchen, and about ten o'clock a couple of old tom-cats got to rarin' and chargin' around on it, and carryin' on like sin. There was four inches of snow on the roof, and it was frozen so that there was a right smart crust of ice on it, and the moon was shining bright, and we could see them cats like daylight. First, they'd stand off and e-yow-yow-yow, just as if they was a-cussin' one another, you know, and bow up their backs and push up their tails, and swell around and spit; and then, all of a sudden, the grey cat he'd snatch a handful of fur out of the yaller cat's ham, and spin him around like the button on a barn-door. But the yaller cat was game, and he'd come and clinch, and the way they'd gouge, and bite, and howl, and the way they'd make their fur fly, was powerful.

"Well, Jim, he got disgusted with the row, and 'lowed he'd climb out there and snake 'em off'n that roof. He hadn't reely no notion of doin' it likely, but we everlastin'ly dogged him, and bully-ragged him, and 'lowed he'd always bragged how he wouldn't take a dare, and so on, till bimeby, he highsted up the winder, and lo and behold you! he went—went exactly as he was—nothin' on but a shirt, and it was short! But you ought to a' seen him! You ought to see him cer-ee-pin' over that ice, and diggin' his toe-nails and his finger-nails in for to keep from slippin'; and, 'bove all, you ought to seen that shirt a-flappin' in the wind, and them long ridick'lous shanks of his'n a-glistenin' in the moonlight!

"Them comp'ny folks was down there under the eaves—the whole squad of 'em under that ornery shed of old dead Washin'ton Bower vines—all sett'n round about two dozen sassers of hot candy, which they'd sot in the snow to cool. And they was laughin' and talkin' lively; but, bless you! they didn't know nothin' 'bout the panorama that was goin' on over their heads. Well, Jim, he went a-sne-akin' and a-sne-akin' up unbeknown to them Tom cats—they was a-swishin' their tails and yow-yowin' and threatenin' to clinch, you know, and not payin' any attention—he went a-sne-akin' right up the comb of the roof till he was in a foot 'n a half of 'em, and then all of a sudden he made a grab for the yellow cat! Thunder! he missed fire and slipped his holt, and his heels flew up and he flopped on his back, and shot off'n that roof like a dart!—went a-smashin' and a-crashin' down through them old rusty vines, and landed right in the dead centre of all of them comp'ny people!—sot down like a yearthquake in them two dozen sassers of red-hot candy, and let off a howl that you might have heard a mile off! Them girls—well, they felt, you know. They see he wasn't dressed for company, and so they left—all done in a second! It was just one little war-hoop and a whish! of their dresses, and, blame the wench of 'em was in sight anywheres!

"Jim he were a sight. He was gormed with that bilin' hot molasses candy clean down to his heels, and had more busted sassers hangin' to him than if he was an Injun princess—and he came a-prancin' upstairs just a-whoopin' and a-cussin', and every jump he made he shed some china, and every squirm he fetched he dripped some candy!

"And blistered! Why bless your soul, that pore cretur couldn't reely set down comfortable for as much as four weeks."

G. R. WADLEIGH.

THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS.

THE hare had many friends of old,
By Gay, the fabulist, we're told.
But when misfortune overtook him,
And he was hunted, they forsook him.

Escaped, and safe, said he with sorrow,
"I from ancestral ass must borrow
The length of ear which thus I lent
To their professions of intent.

"Yet them with me I'd fain ally
Against mankind. I mean to try,
And sure the way to touch them best
Will be through their self-interest."

So he at last resolved to plan
A shooting party to kill Man:
And, to allure the selfish bunch on,
To promise a luxurious luncheon.

He pictured to himself the mole,
The weasel, rat, and water-vole,
Fox, partridge, rabbit, grouse, and snipe
For shooting—eating—mischief—ripe!

He thought how, followed by the crew
Across the stubble he'd pursue
His enemy, remorseless Man,
And shoot the creature as he ran;

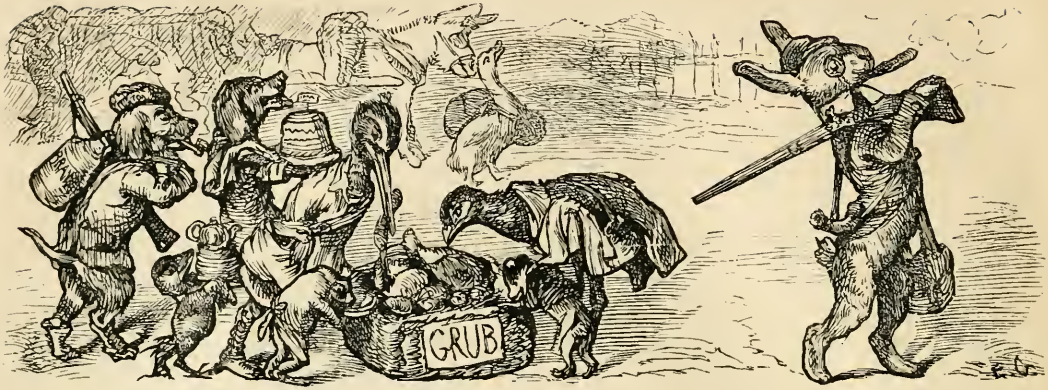
And how they would adjourn at noon
To take their luncheon opportune,
And then he'd take a pipe—the rabbit
He knew had learnt the baneful habit.

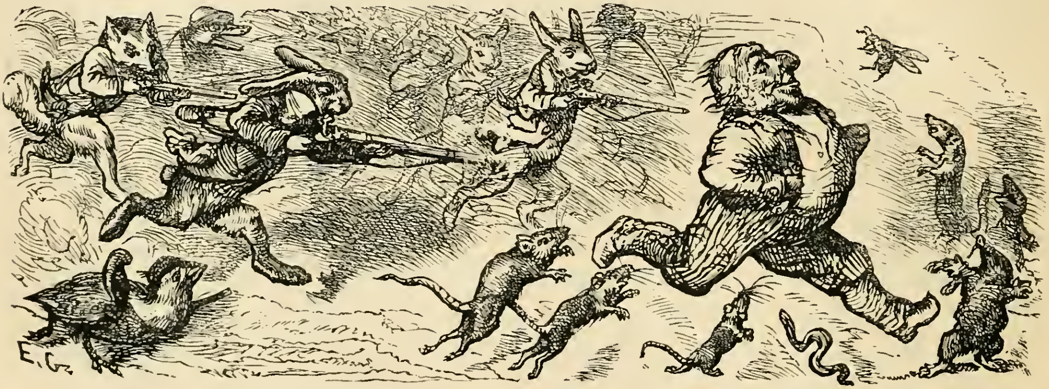
(Anti-tobacconists will storm
And say to smoke's in hares "bad form"—
But note the picture, where you'll see
A rabbit tippling *eau de vie*.)

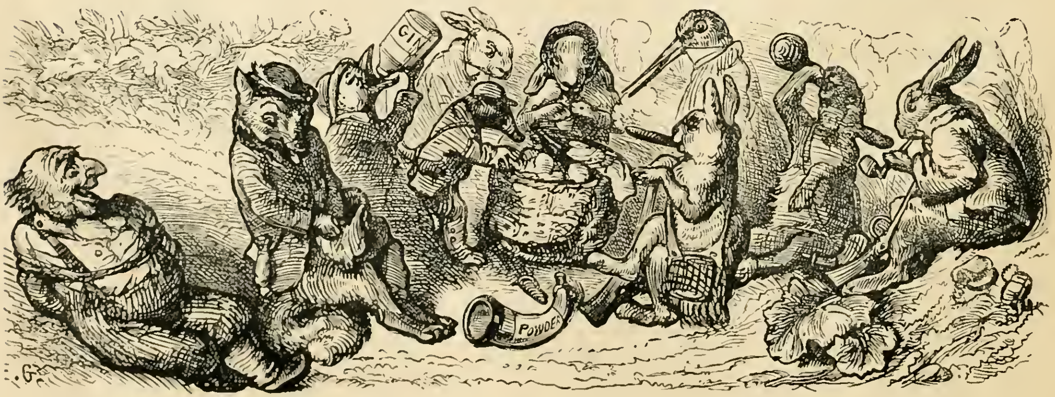
And in his mind the fancy lurked
That, if the scheme he wisely worked,
And put his friends well forward, they
For failures penalty would pay.

So forth he sped to ask his friends—
Here moral-less my fable ends!
He ran his neck into a snare;
A squeak—two kicks—and *exit* Hare!

THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS.

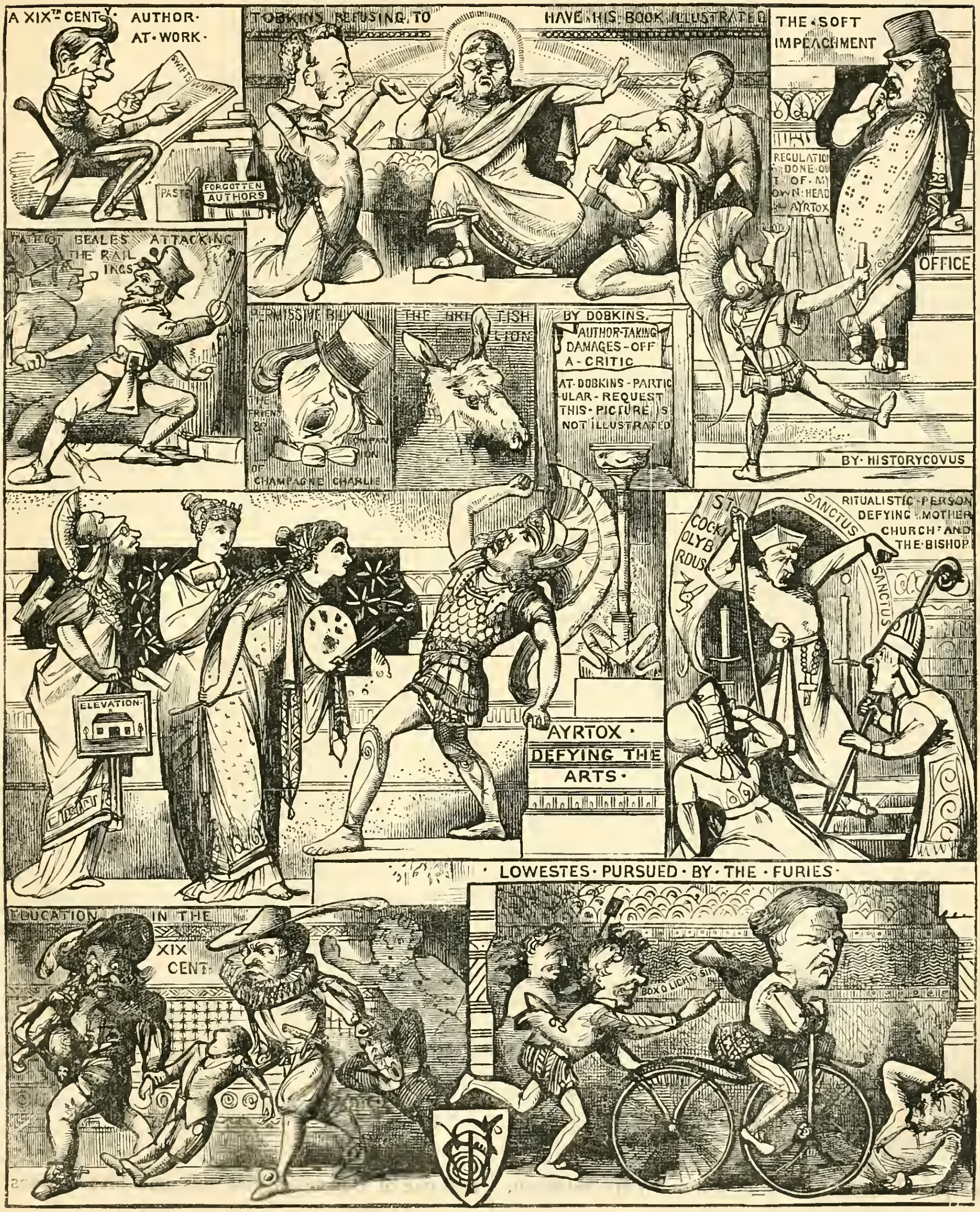





GIN
POWDER
E. G.

See page 79.]

MODERN THEMES IN ANCIENT GUISE.


A XIXTH CENTY. AUTHOR. AT. WORK.
SWIFTS WORKS
PASTE
FORGOTTEN AUTHORS
TOBKINS REFUSING TO HAVE HIS BOOK ILLUSTRATED
THE SOFT IMPEACHMENT
REGULATION DONE OUT OF MY OWN HEAD AYRTOX
OFFICE
PATRIOT BEALES ATTACKING THE RAILINGS
PERMISSIVE BILL
THE FRIEND & COMPANION OF CHAMPAGNE CHARLIE
THE BRITISH LION
BY DOBKINS.
AUTHOR TAKING DAMAGES OFF A CRITIC
AT DOBKINS PARTICULAR REQUEST THIS PICTURE IS NOT ILLUSTRATED
BY HISTORYCOVUS
ST COCKOLYBRDUS
SANCTUS
SANCTUS
RITUALISTIC PERSON DEFYING MOTHER CHURCH AND THE BISHOP
ELEVATION
AYRTOX DEFYING THE ARTS
LOWESTES PURSUED BY THE FURIES
EDUCATION IN THE XIX CENT.
BOX O LIGHTS SIR

MY DOUBLE AND I.

MY godfather and godmother were good enough to bestow upon me the name of Alexander, and from my father I inherited the patronymic of *Small*, in addition to several good things of this earth. In fact, to use a vulgar expression, I might be said to have been born with that useful article, a silver spoon, in my mouth. My father was a plain, matter-of-fact Lancashire man, the architect of his own fortune. He had commenced life as a lad in a Manchester cotton warehouse, and by diligent attention, combined with great natural shrewdness and aptitude for business, had gradually worked himself up to the position of chief salesman, and in the end as a partner in the firm. A self-taught man himself, he knew the value of education, and had sent me when young to the grammar school of his native town, Hawkshead. Here, amidst the lovely scenery of Coniston, Windermere, and Esthwaite, several of the happiest years of my life were passed. To my schooldays at Hawkshead, doubtless, may be attributed that attachment for the Lake District, which has caused me to revisit it whenever opportunity served.

Several years after leaving school were spent in comparative idleness. It was my father's wish that I should enter a Manchester warehouse, but as I showed a great distaste for it, he did not press me on the subject. I was an only son, and was allowed to do pretty much as I liked. In one thing only my father would not yield. I panted for a military life. Like my famous namesake, I would achieve greatness and conquer nations. My mother listened to me, and believed I was born to be a great commander, but her better half only laughed at me and called me a fool. My aspirations were doomed to receive a sudden check. The volunteer fever was at its height, and I was allowed to join one of the corps raised in my native city. Never shall I forget the moment when I first donned the uniform of the corps. How I strutted up and down my bed-room, and admired myself in the mirror! Night after night I fell in with the awkward squad, and did my best to learn the rudiments of a profession of which I believed myself born to be so distinguished an ornament; but, alas that I should have to tell it! I was utterly incompetent. My goose-step was a failure, drill an incomprehensible mystery; and from first to last, as the sergeant more than once politely told me, I was one of the Queen's hard bargains. I felt that I had mistaken my vocation. I gave up the army in disgust, and took to fishing.

My father's death, and my inheritance of a moderate fortune, enabled me to follow my favourite sport uncontrolled. My mother and I retired to a small estate which had been purchased by my late father in the neighbourhood of Sheffield, and here, in her society and in fishing excursions, most of my time was passed. The lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland were my constant haunts. On Esthwaite Water how many score of jack have fallen victim to my spoon—not the before-mentioned silver one, but a plated article. Day after day have I been pulled slowly round the lake by old Watty Tyson, and listened to the yarns of that celebrated fisherman. I have fished all day in the "Priest Pot," when the rain has fallen in torrents, yet never tired of following the "gentle craft."

At last I had found an art in which I could excel. I was a successful fisherman, but hitherto I had confined myself to trolling and bottom-fishing. Why should I not contend against the lordly salmon? I would have a week on one of our English rivers, and next year a trip to Norway!

A lovely morning in August found me at Workington, ready to try my luck on the Derwent. I took up my quarters at a homely but comfortable inn; and after breakfast I sallied forth, accompanied by a lad to carry the spoil. My tackle was the most perfect that money could buy—landing-net, gaff, and one of Bowness's best rods, and flies the most gorgeous and killing. I had permission to fish in a part of the river strictly preserved, and was soon at work, whipping the stream as if for my very life. For weeks I had been studying in theory the art of fly-fishing, and I knew exactly how the turn of the wrist should be made and the fly be allowed to drop softly on the water; but try as I would, it would never fall where I wished it: now it went flying round my head and within an inch of my attendant's ear; now it was fast in a thistle, and then it went flop into the water like a penny-piece. For a whole week did I persevere at that blessed stream, until every bone in my poor body ached, and I must have frightened the life out of half the fish. Like my military aspirations, my attempt at salmon-fishing was a dead letter; and as I had given up the former, so I gave up the latter, in sheer disgust.

The next day was Saturday, and a coach left Cockermouth for Keswick early in the morning. My traps were speedily packed, and the train carried me the few miles between Workington and Cockermouth, giving me an hour to spare in that ancient Cumberland borough, which, familiar as I was with most parts of the lake district, I had not before visited. The castle has, with its historical associations, an interest for every Englishman. Here Piers Gaveston ruled in the olden time, and Mary of Scotland came after her escape from Dunbar; whilst in later years, the Cumberland royalists and Cromwell's troops contended for its possession. In the castle-yard, however, there was something to me more attractive than its crumbling old walls. A fair English girl, with dark brown eyes and nut-brown hair. She was accompanied by an elderly lady, apparently her mother, a somewhat fussy dame, but looking good-natured and kindly.

When I took my seat on the outside of the coach, I found the two ladies whom I had seen at the castle were to be my fellow-passengers sitting just in front of me; the other passengers were two men evidently farmers, a tall military-looking gentleman whom the coachman addressed as Colonel, and another gentleman, so much resembling me in every respect that he might have been taken for my twin brother. Not only in personal appearance, but in dress, was there this similarity—from the grey tweed suit and deer-stalker hat, down to the colour of his gloves. I looked at my double until I could scarcely believe my eyes; and but for the fresh morning air blowing on to my face, I might have thought it was all a dream. Though so much like me externally, there the resemblance ceased. I am quiet and reserved, scarcely ever speaking to strangers. He was full of animation, chatting with all on the coach, including the two ladies, and on the best terms with himself and everybody else. I confess I began to dislike him—the feeling, perhaps, having in it a little of envy at the attention he paid to the young lady, whose pretty face had so attracted me. If my surprise had been great on first seeing my double at Cockermouth, it was to be surpassed at Keswick. He was off the coach in an instant, and after assisting the ladies to alight, gallantly escorted them into the hotel. I felt that I hated him, and would not stay in the same house, though it was one of the best in the town. Seizing my valise and fishing-basket, I was quickly moving away, when a voice stopped me:

"Stay, my friend! I will trouble you for my luggage."

I turned round, and there was my double again.

"Sir," I replied, "you are mistaken. This is my valise."

"And I tell you, my friend, that it is mine."

"How dare you, sir?" I said. "Here are my initials marked upon it—'A. S. S.'"

"And what may your name be?" inquired my interrogator.

"I don't know that I am bound to tell my name to a stranger, but, to show you that this is my property, I am Alexander Small, of Sheffield,—A. S. S."

"Well, I confess that is somewhat strange, for I'm also an A. S. S.—Andrew Smith, of Southampton."

When I looked at the valise in my hand, I saw I was in error. Though exactly resembling mine, it was not quite so new, and my own was found afterwards amongst the other luggage. I commenced an apology for my mistake.

"My dear fellow, say no more. We are so much alike in every respect, that we ought to be friends. Stay and dine with me."

As I have said before, I am rather shy with strangers, but his manner was so frank that I could not refuse him.

My new friend soon made himself at home in the hotel. Rooms were given to us adjoining each other. The night was a wet one, and he proposed billiards to while away the time. There was no table in the house, but one at the hotel opposite, and, as I had got on my slippers, he carried me over the dark dirty road. In return for his kindness, I had to pay two sovereigns, which I lost to him at billiards, and the price of the games, and sundry brandies. He talked much about the ladies we had met on the coach; had learnt their names and residence. As I had at first surmised, they were mother and daughter.

"I tell you what it is, Small," said he, "that girl is a deuced pretty little thing, and has got a tidy fortune, though it's all settled on her. I believe I should marry her if it was not for the dowager. I don't think I could manage with a mother-in-law. No, Small, a mother-in-law would be too much for me."

Next morning Mr. Smith proposed that we should have a carriage and pair and drive over to Buttermere. The journey was delightful, and we had an excellent dinner there, for which, by-the-way, I had to pay, my double having left his purse in the pocket of the coat which he had worn the day before.

"It's all right, my boy," said he; "you pay for the dinner, and I'll settle for the carriage."

By daylight on the Monday I was on Derwentwater at my favourite sport. The fish were on the feed, and I caught a couple of dozen nice perch. I had been so taken up with the fish that I was surprised when I found it was eleven o'clock. I returned to the hotel, very hungry, but thoroughly satisfied with my morning's enjoyment. I did not see anything of Mr. Smith for the rest of the day. When the chambermaid brought my slippers into the coffee room, where I was the only guest, I inquired after the gentleman who had come to the hotel with me.

"Your brother, sir? Oh, he went over to Ambleside this morning."

I assured her he was no relation of mine.

"Oh, sir, you are such a funny gentleman, and likes to have your jokes,"—and out of the room she went.

"What the deuce does she mean? I must inquire further in the morning."

The next morning I determined to make my way to my old quarters at Esthwaite, and have a little more fishing before my return to Sheffield; I rung for my bill, and told them I was going to leave by the coach for Ambleside. When my bill came, I saw at once there was some mistake: I had never consumed all those expensive articles:—brandy and soda, ditto, ditto, devilled kidneys and champagne, soda and brandy, carriage to Buttermere, boots soling, and sodas and brandies again, for at least a dozen times. When I looked again at the account I saw it was for Rooms 19 and 20—those occupied by myself and Mr. Smith. I rung for the landlady, and asked for an explanation.

"Your brother, the quiet gentleman, told me, sir, when he went away yesterday, that I was to charge both bills to you."

"*My brother, the quiet gentleman!* Why, goodness, madam, he is no brother of mine!"

"Don't madam me, sir, and how can you deny your own flesh and blood? Any one could tell he was your brother, though a very different person, I will say, from you. You've turned my house upside down since you were here. Cook tells me that you had the impudence to kiss her on Sunday, when she was making the pudding. And all the girls in the place are complaining of your tricks. How dare you go into my kitchen! But I need not ask, for you've impudence stamped on your face. Pay your bill, if you please, sir, and go!'—and the landlady disappeared in a high state of insulted dignity.

I thought the best thing I could do was to follow the landlady's advice, pay the bill, and leave at once. I was so disgusted that I returned direct to Sheffield, heartily sick of my last fishing excursion.

A few days after my arrival at home, I noticed in a Cumberland paper, which was sent to me weekly, the following paragraph:

"ACCIDENT ON WINDERMERE—*Gallant Rescue by a Gentleman.*—On Monday, an accident which might, but for the bravery of a gentleman, have terminated fatally, happened to Miss Mary Sweetbriar, of The Retreat, Kendal. The young lady, with her mother, was amongst the passengers on board the steam gondola on Windermere. Miss Sweetbriar by some means overbalanced herself and fell into the lake, and must have been drowned but for the gallantry displayed by Alexander Small, Esq., of Sheffield, who instantly plunged into the water, and supported her until assistance was at hand."

Here was mystery upon mystery. Could I be awake or dreaming? On Monday I was at Keswick, and yet on the same day I was rescuing distressed damsels from Windermere!

Six months after I received a letter from Mrs. Sweetbriar, reproaching me for my heartless conduct to her daughter, whom I had, she said, treated in the most shameful manner, making an offer of my hand, and then leaving suddenly, and without assigning a cause.

I replied as courteously as possible to the lady, assuring her that she was labouring under a great mistake, as I had not the pleasure of her acquaintance, and was not aware that I had ever seen Miss Sweetbriar.

Three days later I received a letter from a firm of solicitors at Lancaster, of which the following is a copy.

"SWEETBRIAR *versus* YOURSELF.

"Sir,—We are instructed by our client, Mr. James Sweetbriar, of Kendal, as next male friend of Miss Sweetbriar, to commence an action against you for breach of promise to marry, and shall feel obliged by your favouring us with the name of your solicitors forthwith.

"To Alexander Small, Esq."

I consulted with my dear mother, and she advised that I should at once go over to Kendal, and offered to accompany me. I found, as I had almost expected, that Miss Sweetbriar was the lady I had seen in Cockermouth Castle, and who had been my fellow-passenger on the coach to Keswick. I had but little difficulty in proving to Mrs. Sweetbriar that the impudent rascal Smith, or whoever he might be, had made use of my name on more than one occasion. He had, however, shown great bravery in rescuing Miss Sweetbriar, though abusing afterwards the advantage it had given him, to trifle with her feelings.

From this interview we all became great friends, and within twelve months Mary Sweetbriar was my dear little wife; and we have neither of us ever had cause to regret the adventure between *my double and me.*

W. D. L'ESTRANGE.

◆

THE FAITH OF THE CHILDREN.

I.

COME, let us now take heart of grace,
And venture on a commonplace;
A thought that hath been put in rhymes,
Or words of prose, a thousand times.

Unluckily, there is a ring
Of sentiment about the thing;
Besides, it really opens out
Some difficulty and some doubt.

Surgit amari—ah, you know
As well as I! But let that go:
I swear by Age, I swear by Youth,
That I believe the thought is truth.

And, what is more, if space were lent,
We might pursue the argument
Until we found that bitter flavour
Lost in a more celestial savour.

Pray, take my word! I have pursued
This thought through many a tangled wood
Of doubt and pain, and found at last
The thought, the truth, stand staunch and fast.

Well, life is short and art is long,
But I will put it in a song,
And should you find that we agree,
How very jolly that will be!

II.

The air is chill, the paths are damp,
The children, round the parlour fire,
Are talking of Aladdin's lamp
And genies that from jars aspire.

And, pointing to a chamber light,
One says, "That lamp I mean to take,
And rub it up with all my might—
Perhaps a genie forth will break!"

And one, "I only wish I knew—
Papa, I have asked this before—
Are fairy stories really true?"
And then they look towards the door,

With thoughts of fairy godmothers,
And wands of might, and goblins dim;
I knew a boy (boys might do worse)
Who said that fairies spoke to him,—

He *heard* them in his bed by night;
And William Blake, you know, he said
He saw a fairy's funeral, quite
Distinctly, by a garden bed.

Now, when your little girl or boy
Asks, "Oh! are fairy stories true?"
Or talks of some magician's toy
As in its power—what do you do?

My practice has been simply this:
To say, "Judge for yourself, my dear;
You will find out"—and here a kiss—
"Some day, though not perhaps this year."

III.

Ah, they will know some day; but when?
Will they when they have grown to men?
I swear by Youth, I swear by Age,
That I have not yet grown so sage.

For if you solemnly began,
"Do you believe in Fairies, man?"
I should be posed. A waking dream
Of leaving out the bowl of cream

To feast the goblin in the night,
Who makes the kitchen clean and tight,
Often comes to me. I defy,
When under a soft summer sky,

Filled with white moonshine, you are 'ware
Of distant jasmine in the air,
Yes, I defy you to escape,
Though tied with stiff wiseacre tape,

Soft shudders, such as might be caught
From roses rustling to a thought,
Or faintly trembling foxglove spires,
With music bells of quaint desires.

Then snaps like tow your wisdom-band!
Then you believe in Fairy Land!
You cannot quote a fairy's size;
But, then, the fault is in your eyes!

I tell you, while I write this verse,
I feel quite creepy—my hair stirs!
I scarce could touch my lamp, for fear
Some dreadful genie should appear!

"Ah, I burn gas," you say,—"Dear me!
What an odd person you must be!
I dare say, if you durst but tell,
You quite believe in Zadkiel!"

IV.

Sir, I am sure the sky's above,
The solid earth's beneath us all;
Nor hope nor fear, nor hate nor love,
Can change the laws that rule the ball.

They say so. Bless you, I have read
Of gravitation in my time;
Phosphates, I think, are in my bread;
A Point produced will make a Line.

I have had telegrams. I know
The wonders of the penny post;
I know how fast a train can go;
I laugh, sir, at the Cock Lane Ghost.

But when you tell me, to my face,
That all the fairy lore of men
In scientific works and ways
Is being made real, I laugh again!

Something there is, beyond all that,
Of old-world wont and old-world wit—
When the great globe was deemed a flat,
And dusky gods on clouds would sit.

Something—some meaning in the faith
Of which the children keep such hold,
Which flits about us like a wraith
When we have passed the age of gold.

Something—a hint of arts laid by
In garrets of the human brain,
For making runes, for finding joy,
Despoiling churls, and losing pain.

The children in the garrets grope—
How close to heaven the gables stand!—
And some day they will find, I hope,
The missing scroll of Fairy Land!

V.

"Suppose they do," you say again,
"What sort of life would ours be then;
Goblins occult in street and square,
And fairy grandames in the air,

Turning with wands this into that?
Why, what could you or I be at?
The days, the nights, would all be vext
With wonder what was coming next!"

I answer, Not more then than now:
Surprises *do* come; and the *how*,
We think we know, but really don't:
It all depends on use and wont.

Surprises, *ex vi termini*,
Must be occasional. But the die,
For common things as well as strange,
Drops in the dark, beyond our range.

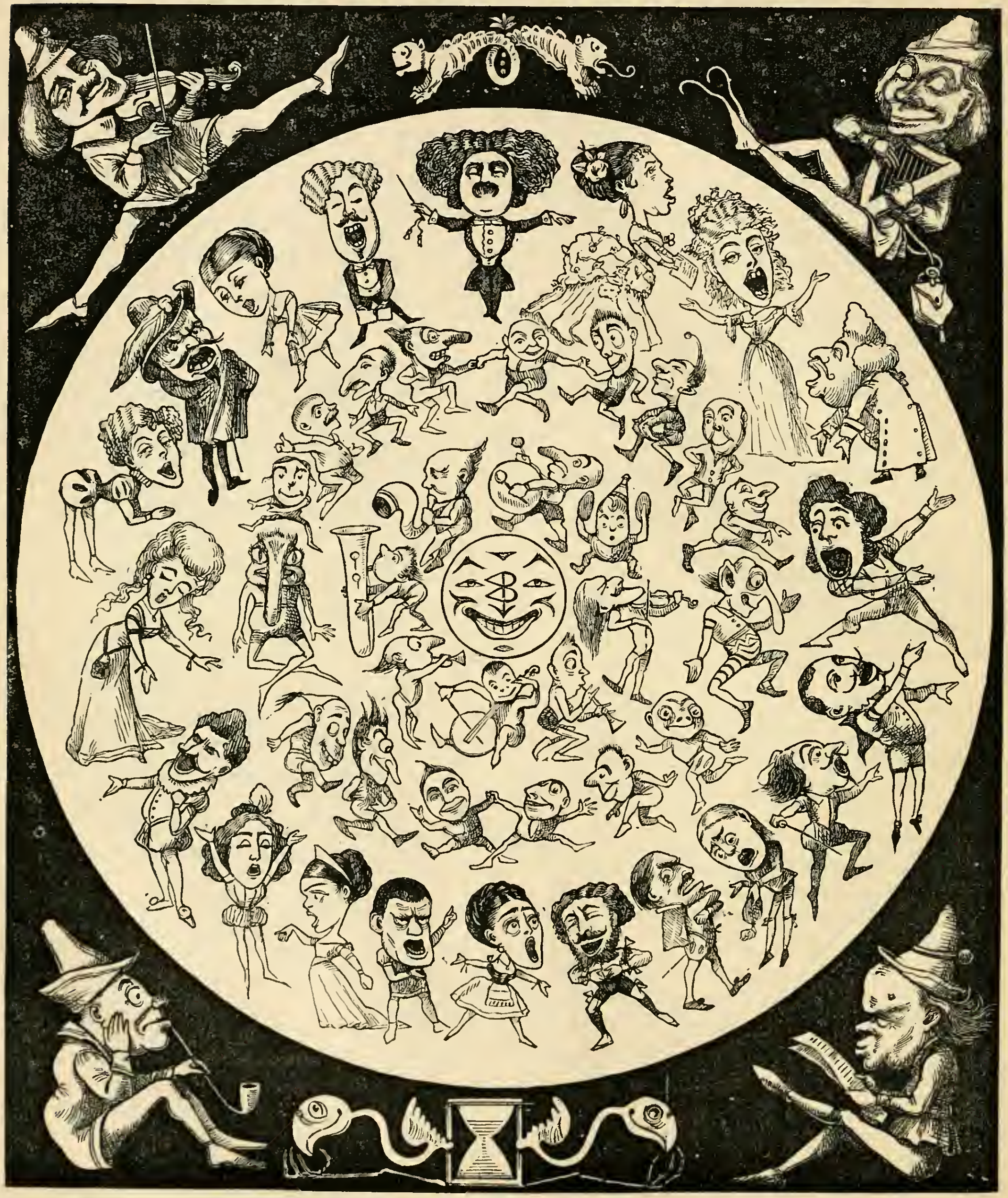
And if the children find that scroll—
I trust they may, upon my soul!—
Why, if the fairy characters
Should even prove legible to curs,

Such lore, if used in naughty ways,
Will slap the user in the face,
And only the predestined wit
Will know the proper use of it.

Oh, joyful lore! When it transmutes
Your tabby to a Puss-in-Boots,
May I be there to see the show,
And to exclaim, "I told you so!"

THE AUTHOR OF "LILLIPUT LEVEE."

ECCENTRIC CONCENTRIC CIRCLES.



HOW I LOST MY INTENDED.

I AM not a rich man—I never was, and very much fear I never shall be; for, notwithstanding my having courted and woed Fortune, that fickle goddess has persistently turned her back upon me. I have often asked myself the question—"What have I done to deserve this treatment?" and have always come to the conclusion that I am the innocent victim of circumstances—still, I *am* a victim, and find but little consolation in being an innocent one. In proof of this assertion, I will relate how I lost my intended.

Some few years back, it was my chance to be invited to a large croquet party. Of course I went, and being a first-rate player, soon became an object of interest to the fair players, and one of envy to those of the sterner sex. Amongst the former was a Miss Sophia Wrenton—a fine handsome girl of about eighteen. She played croquet admirably—almost as well as I did—and was dressed exquisitely. It was a perfect sight to see her walk across the lawn: her golden hair, glittering in the sunshine, escaped in heavy masses from beneath her pretty little hat; her blue satin dress, looped up just high enough to show an exquisite ankle and tiny foot, incased in the daintiest of shoes, that drove one nearly wild, and made me envy the ball she placed it on—(we did not play loose croquet then, but did the old-fashioned way of holding one ball tight with the foot). I played so that she might croquet me each time; therefore, I need not say that I lost the game—but I was rewarded with a glance that was worth all the games ever known. I led her to a seat—I procured refreshments—I strolled with her round the garden—I made love to her. She listened, and at last informed me that she always took a walk in Hyde Park at 11 a.m. Soon after this the party broke up, and we bade farewell to each other with a gentle pressure of the hand, and a glance that said as plainly as could be—"We part to meet again."

Every morning at eleven o'clock, a tall handsome man, with an extremely long moustache and an aristocratic air, might be seen wending his way beneath the branches of the noble trees that, verdant with foliage, shed their shadows over that most celebrated equestrian way, ycleped Rotten Row.

Gentle reader, *I* was that man.

At the same hour, approaching from the opposite direction, a tall handsome girl of about eighteen summers could be observed. Her step had that peculiar elasticity which shows anxiety to reach the beloved object of her search. A gentle flush spread over her peach-like cheeks as she drew near the gentleman before mentioned. That sweet girl was Sophia. We meet, and——But no; I cannot describe the rapture of our meeting!

Things went on in this way for a couple of months. I found Sophia all that I could wish, and I was all that she desired. She scorned wealth: I was poor, and therefore escaped her scorn. She doted on mysteries: I was a complete one—therefore she doted on me. She loved romance: I had a particular reason for romancing. What two people in the world could be more suited to each other?

During our walks I discovered that Sophia hated anything commonplace or low. Thus she would have had no objection to my poverty forcing me to abstain from dinners for a week or a fortnight; but she would have hated me had I dared to mention that I was unromantically hungry, or expressed Mr. Pickwick's desire for "chops and tomato sauce." I also found that I had a rival, but, luckily, a rich one—therefore Sophia scorned him, but at the same time used him to make me jealous and our situation more romantic. I muttered his name—(which, by-the-way, was Jenkins)—in deep sepulchral tones that made Sophia tremble. I allowed my hair to grow, loosened my necktie, pulled down the ends of my moustache, and sighed like an American goat-sucker.

Sophia had, on her part, learned my address—

indeed, I had made no secret of that, for it was a good one—being Bernard Street, Russell Square. She thought I had the drawing-rooms: I *knew* I had the back attic, but felt it would not be kind to undeceive her.

It so happened that I had to go to Reading on a small matter of business during the week the races were held at that town. Let not the gentle reader of this sad history imagine that I am a betting man. Banish the thought! And yet if I *do* indulge a little in matters connected with the turf, noble lords and dukes have done the same, therefore I need not be ashamed, and——well, no matter—let it pass.

My journey to Reading had proved unfortunate, and I returned home to my apartments—(I always put the "s" in: it sounds better)—a sad, if not a wiser, man: my heart full of care—my pockets void of money. Lighting a candle, which I found placed ready for me on the umbrella-stand, I crept slowly upstairs to bed, hoping to forget my troubles in sleep. Placing the candle on a chest of drawers which served as a toilet-table, I gazed in the glass at my haggard face. The sight was too much for me, and I turned away to find consolation in a flask of spirits that I always kept concealed in a hat-box. In doing so my eyes fell upon a pretty pink note that had been placed on my table during my absence. I seized it instantly, and tearing it open, found that it was from Sophia, inviting me to dine at her father's. Yes! the dear girl had persuaded her father to allow her to ask me to a dinner party. I have no doubt it cost her some little violation of the truth; but she had succeeded, and I should see her surrounded with that wealth and luxury that belonged to her, and which I devoutly hoped would soon belong to me. Overcome with pleasure, I blew out the candle, sprang into bed, and dreamed of white favours, carriages and horses, a balance at my banker's, and Sophia!

The next morning I arose and dressed at the same time, indulging in a light breakfast, composed of weak coffee and one of those small fish for which Yarmouth is so famous, and ruminating over the state of my affairs. They stood thus: I was without money. Sophia's dinner party came off on that very evening, and my necessity had compelled me to lend my dress suit to a supposititious uncle. What was I to do? It was true I had a gold watch and chain, but Sophia had admired them, and I did not like to appear before her without them. I sat down and pondered over the situation, and came to the conclusion that there was but one way, and that was to take out my dress suit, leaving my repeater in its place. I would wear the chain, and no one need know I was *minus* a watch.

The evening arrived; I had completed my toilet, and stood before the glass admiring the fit of my coat, and giving a few final touches to my white cravat. Taking my latch-key, I fastened it to the end of my chain, instead of my watch, and fixed it in my waistcoat pocket; I then gathered up the few miscellaneous articles which I had removed from the pockets of my walking suit, and distributed them about my person, taking care that no pocket should bulge out to spoil the perfect set of my clothes, and in a few moments was driving rapidly towards the home of my dear Sophia.

I cannot describe the luxury of old Wrenton's mansion—it was tremendous. The very street-door had a rich appearance about it, having two brass knockers on it; the hall was completely furnished; the stair-carpets were so thick that I felt as if I were walking on a hatbrush. The drawing-room was all glass and gold, the curtains of lace, the chairs and sofas covered with blue silk. I was nearly overpowered with the wealth displayed; but plucking up courage, I entered the room with a graceful bow and a firm eye, that already looked upon this magnificence as partly mine. I did all in my power to ingratiate myself with Sophia's father—a short, fat, pimply, purple man, who breathed heavily through a brilliant nose—and flatter myself that I succeeded, for when the servant announced that dinner was served, Mr. Wrenton desired me to take Sophia downstairs. I saw my rival's look of envy, for he was handed over to a fat old dowager; nevertheless, the wretch managed to be seated next to Sophia, and persisted in joining in our conversation.

The party was a large one, the dinner excellent, and the wines superb. The conversation was general, and turned on travelling; and I was loud in condemning the English railways, comparing them to those of the continent, of which I had a large experience, having had at different times to seek in foreign lands that protection denied me by my own country.

"It may be as you say," said my rival, the horrid Jenkins, "but for my part I prefer the English lines. You get more attention and civility from the officials."

"I am sorry to say that I do not agree with you," I replied, "and I am sure you would own I am right had you been with me when I was going to Marseilles; or even more so had you travelled with me to Baden-Baden."

As I spoke I saw Sophia glance at me with pride.

"Things may have altered," said Jenkins, "but I travelled both France and Germany for ten years, when I was junior partner to Print, Calicoe & Co., but I never had any civility that I had not to pay heavily for."

I placed my eyeglass in my eye, and surveyed Mr. Jenkins with a look of contempt, at the same time observing that *I* travelled for pleasure, not business.

"I didn't," replied Jenkins; "I travelled for the firm, and very well it paid me. One thing you must own: our men are quicker and more correct."

"Not at all," said I, triumphantly. "Only last week I had to go to Reading, and on leaving the train I entered the refreshment-room and had a cup of coffee; after which I left the station, forgetting to give up my ticket, as no one asked me for it."

"You must excuse my scarcely crediting that, sir," said Mr. Jenkins. "Are you sure you did not give up the ticket before entering the refreshment-room?"

"I am positive of that," I replied, "and to prove what I said is correct I will show you the ticket, which by chance I have with me."

As I spoke I cast a glance of scorn at Jenkins; then turning disdainfully from him, I took the ticket from my pocket, and gave it to Sophia to pass to him.

Sophia glanced at it and screamed, and that brute Jenkins at once snatched it from her hand!

"What 's this?" he exclaimed. "This is not a railway ticket, but a pawnbroker's one for a gold watch, £3 10s., Ernest de Vere, 30 Bernard Street, Russell Square, dated to-day!"

A titter ran round the room, and I felt sinking through the floor! It was but too true. In mistake I had given him that horrid ticket in memory of my repeater, instead of the railway one! I tried to laugh it off, but it would not do. My disguise was seen through, and I was undone!

A week afterwards I read in the newspapers that Sophia had become Mrs. Jenkins—*sic transit gloria mundi.*

N.B.—I still have that fatal ticket, but will willingly part with it for a trifle.

Alfred R. Phillips.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

I.

THERE was once a man of great wealth. He had gold and silver clothing whenever he liked to wear it, and he had diamond rings for his fingers, and diamond buckles to his shoes. There were rumours that he used to wear jewels on his toes, like Sardanapalus, or Prester John, or the Nawab of Surat (I forget which of them it was); and that his pillow and bolster were stuffed with sovereigns. He had also landed property and house property; arable land, pasture land, garden land, and moor-land. He was the owner of mansions and cottages, which he let at most exorbitant rents. Perhaps it may seem surprising that persons should have been willing to pay so dear for houses that were no better than others which were to be had much cheaper; but it was considered a great honour to live in a house let by a man who had rings on his toes, and pillows stuffed with gold; so there was always a great run upon these houses, when there were any of them to be let, and the agent who had the letting of them always described them as most eligible and desirable mansions, or cottages, as the case might be. Both the rich and the poor who became tenants of these houses thought it a highly respectable thing; and, besides, some of them fancied they might stand a chance of getting hold of a little of the landlord's money.

II.

As this man was so very wealthy, he did everything proper that other people did, and went to church as regularly as possible. One day when he was at church, he heard the clergyman read about the four rivers of Eden, one of which, as we all know, was the Pison, which, the account says, flows round the whole of a land where there is gold. And the account goes on to say that the gold of that land is good, and that there is bdellium and the onyx-stone. This struck our wealthy friend's mind very much indeed, and he was vexed with himself for never having noticed it before, during all the years he had been to church.

Now, he had immense libraries of his own, as well as immense lands, and yet he never studied in those libraries. He had bought them because he liked to have things all to himself, and not at all because he was fond of poetry, or science, or philosophy, or history, or algebra, or even such simple things as geography or spelling; for he was not. It is true he was often heard to say "I should like to know everything," but that was just as he wanted to have everything; for such was his ignorance or stupidity that he did not reflect that a great many people might know the same thing, and he actually thought that if he could get all the knowledge nobody else would have any. When wise men found that he kept his libraries under lock and key, and never lent a book of any kind, or allowed others to visit his libraries and consult them, he found, to his great surprise, that sometimes he could not get hold of a book, let him offer what price he would for it. This confirmed him in his curious notion that he could own knowledge just as he could own land, and keep other people out of it. One time, a young philosopher, who had just married a beautiful girl, and felt exceedingly merry, sent to this wealthy man and asked him if he had in his library such a thing as a Grammar, because several philosophers were desirous of consulting one. Now, this wealthy man had bought up hundreds of Grammars and hid them away, thinking that if he did this nobody would know grammar any more than he did; so he sent back a message to say that he had plenty of Grammars in his library, but should not allow them to be seen by anybody but himself, as he required them all for his own private studies. When our young philosopher, who was just married, told his beautiful wife of this, she advised him to consult with his friends, and come to an arrangement for sending some one every hour of the day to ask for the loan or sight of a Grammar. This was done, and at last the wealthy man got into such a state of mind that he went to the expense of having iron rooms made on purpose to hold his Grammars, besides putting up placards all round his library, warning the public that any person applying for leave to consult a Grammar would be given into custody for annoying the proprietor.

It may seem a digression, but the fact is, his feelings about geography were just the same as his feelings about grammar; and he had not the least idea of what learned men have written about the Garden of Eden; but he was very sharp in his way, owing to the study of clauses in leases and things of that sort, and he noticed when the clergyman read those words at church, that the words were "where there *is* gold," and again, "the gold of that country *is* good," and again, "there *is* bdellium and the onyx-stone." And so he said to himself,

"Now, this is in the Bible, mind you, and so it is true; and if I can just get to that country, I shall be able to carry off the gold, mind you (for nobody else seems to notice it or to go there); and I shall be able to gather onyx-stones, and I shall make large imports of bdellium, and put it in bonded warehouses, and stand out for a high figure."

Not that he had the least idea of the nature of bdellium, only he thought it probable there would be a customs duty upon it. Also, he said to himself,

"I had better not let people know I am off to the country where there is gold of good quality, with bdellium and onyx, for then others will be on the scent, and I shall lose my profit perhaps; besides, it will sound more religious if I say I want to find the Garden of Eden."

III.

IT would be tedious to relate all the adventures of this wealthy man in his search after the Garden of Eden, as he called it, though what he really meant was, as we have seen, the gold country; and, indeed, nobody knows all his adventures, for he was very fond of keeping things close, and, besides, a man who gets an idea of that sort into his head will be sure to go through a great deal that he hardly knows of his own self, and will certainly never remember. But being, as has been said, a very stupid man in some respects, he came to think that if he went as often as he could to a place of public entertainment the sign of which was the "Adam and Eve," he might come to pick up something about the Garden of Eden. One time, while he was at the "Adam and Eve," he heard a man singing a song about the Four-leaved Shamrock, and this gave him a new idea. If he could only find a four-leaved shamrock, it would be like a wishing-cap, or Aladdin's lamp, and he could then get hold of everything, and keep it to himself. And where should a four-leaved shamrock grow, if not in the Garden of Eden, where it was probable that all manner of curious plants, herbs, and flowers were to be found?—for, after all, he could reason a little, and had managed to think things over just so far. But then came what puzzled him. If he could find a four-leaved shamrock, which was the same as a wishing-cap, he could get to the Garden of Eden whenever he pleased; and then, again, if he could get to the Garden of Eden, he felt sure he would be able to find a four-leaved shamrock. In fact, he could not make up his mind whether he should first look for the Garden of Eden, or try first to find a four-leaved shamrock. This conflict of ideas very much disturbed his mind; and so did the studies in which he engaged with a view to find out what bdellium was. I say studies, but the fact is, he had not the least idea of the proper use of books, and could only go rummaging about among his bookshelves, like a lunatic, after the word bdellium. This, as may be supposed, never came to anything; for a regiment of soldiers might go on reading in the British Museum Library all their lives, and never find out what bdellium was, unless they knew more than our hero; and he was afraid to ask anybody, because he thought it might put people in mind of importing it, as he himself purposed doing.

IV.

THIS wealthy man was one of those persons who can never attend to several things at a time, and the consequence of these studies of his, and the difficulties he felt with respect to the Garden of Eden and the four-leaved shamrock was, that he neglected his other affairs, and at last came to poverty. All he now had in the world, beside what was necessary to support life, was a flower-pot, in which he was for ever trying to see if a four-leaved shamrock would come up. All the seeds he could possibly beg or gather, he sowed in his flower-pot; but nothing that he could possibly take for a four-leaved shamrock came up above the mould. One time it was grass, another time chickweed, another time a scarlet runner, and then perhaps a dandelion. One day, however, when the sun was unusually bright, he fancied, looking out of his garret window into his flower-pot, that he saw just four leaves on one stem peeping above the mould.

"This," said he to himself, trembling with hope, "must be a four-leaved shamrock!" And he lifted the flower-pot closer to his eyes; but as he did so, his hand shook, his hold slipped, and down fell the flower-pot into the street below. The noise it made was very little, but to him it sounded like the crash of a thousand thunders. He tore down the stairs, and, plunging furiously into the street, knelt down, fumbling and grubbing at the remains of his flower-pot and his mould, screeching, in his madness, "My four-leaved shamrock! my four-leaved shamrock!"

V.

Now, nobody takes much notice of a broken flower-pot in a gutter, but who is there that would not be glad to find a four-leaved shamrock? Thus, crowds of people gathered in a moment around the poor broken thing, clutching at the bits of mould; and one carried off one piece and one another, till not a fragment was left. Two little children stood by making large eyes, as the man fell down in a faint, crying, "My four-leaved shamrock! my four-leaved shamrock!"

VI.

When he came to himself he was on a sick-bed in an Infirmary—I really believe it was the Infirmary of a Workhouse. The Infirmary opened upon the garden of the building. It was a most exquisite day in summer. He heard some children singing in another part of the building, and raised himself to look out upon the garden.

Just at that moment two children, the very same children he had seen in the street on the day of his misfortune, entered the room, and walked softly up to his bed-side, bearing between them a flower-pot. He strained his eyes and panted for breath, and stretched out his arms to take it. Before they could speak he caught sight of four green leaves peeping above the mould.

"Do you think this is it, sir?" said the little boy; the little girl smiled.

"It is my four-leaved shamrock!" cried he, seizing the flower-pot, and half feeling at the leaves. "I will go to the Garden of Eden this minute, and I will own everything myself!"

So saying, he closed his eyes, grasping the flower-pot; and the children whispered in terror,

"Where did he say he was going to?"

VII.

But by this time he was there. The gates were closed, but the garden before him was the Garden of Eden. And he saw that Garden; the red red roses and the white, white lilies, and the orange-trees and the myrtle-trees; and the breath of the roses and lilies and myrtles came to him on the air, and he saw the blue-black shade under the cedar-trees, and the great sycamores and limes, and all the infinite ordered wilderness of the gold-green Garden of the Lord. In the soft luminous distance an Angel would glide from out the boscage, glitter down the winding way for a space, and then fade into the embracing bowers. This man wondered at their great silent wings of lustrous purple, and the unutterable white of their garments; but as he had never seen an angel before, he was only puzzled, and looked upon them as strange beings.

Hovering above the gates without, was the Angel with the fire-red brand, far-spread along the sky like the crimson of a stormy sunset. But when this man caught sight within the gates of two children near at hand stooping over a four-leaved plant, he called to them eagerly, in spite of the Angel,

"Let me in, let me in!"

Then the two children came to the gate, and touched it; and though the crimson sword wavered lower and lower, the gates really moved. It seemed as if the children could open them, heavy as they were. This drove the man wild with desire, and he went on saying,

"Let me in! open the gates! I want the four-leaved shamrock that grows here! I want everything for myself!"

"I think, sir," said one of the Innocents, "you have made a mistake. The flower is not for those who want everything for themselves. Do you not want the land where there is the good gold, and the bdellium, and the onyx-stone?"

"Yes, yes! that is it! I want the river Pison! Let me in, let me in!"

But now, looking as far as his eyes could reach, and straining them both through the green-gold mist of the Garden, he fancied he caught sight of a river reaching well into the Garden and wavering in the sunshine, fold after fold, like a silver-white banner far-floated on the grass; and there was a boat on the stream, and two were stepping into the boat, and one of the two was an Angel, and the wind was blowing the sail into a crescent; and, in his madness, he thought he caught sight of golden sand on the sides of the river.

"That's the river Pison, which flows round the land of the good gold, the bdellium, and the onyx!" he cried. "I *will* enter the Garden!"

And he stretched violent hands towards the Gates of Eden. But he started back at the descending sword of the Angel, which was like a whole horizon of crimson sunset over a stormy sea; and he saw the Garden no more, but there came a great earthquake, and the land of the good gold was plain before him. And he gathered a great deal of that gold, and wore onyx rings on his toes, and imported bdellium, and lived wealthy and prosperous ever afterwards. At least, that is one version of the story. Another is that he had been dreaming, and that he shortly died on his bed in that Infirmary. The one thing to be hoped is that he did not get into the Garden of Eden. For simple as the garden paths looked to him then, there is within the Paradise of the Lord an infinite Maze, in which he would have wandered for ever, lost, though the Innocents can follow every turn of it without a map and without thinking. And what would he have done in that place, when he had never in his life before seen an angel of joy, and did not, until the sword visibly descended, fear the sentinel of God at the gate—although the dreadful brand was like a stretch of crimson sunset over a stormy sea?

MATTHEW BROWNE.

NELLY'S NECKLACE.

I.

I HAVE brought the string of pearls
For my prettiest of girls:
Let your merry laughter ring!
Do not reck
The wild ripple of your hair
On your dimpled shoulders bare,
As I clasp the sheeny string
Round your neck!

II.

Here are sixteen snowy pearls,
Glad to nestle in your curls;
Round your neck they closely cling
With delight—
Fitting emblem of your years,
Free from sorrow, care, and tears;
Sixteen summers softly sing,
Pure and bright!

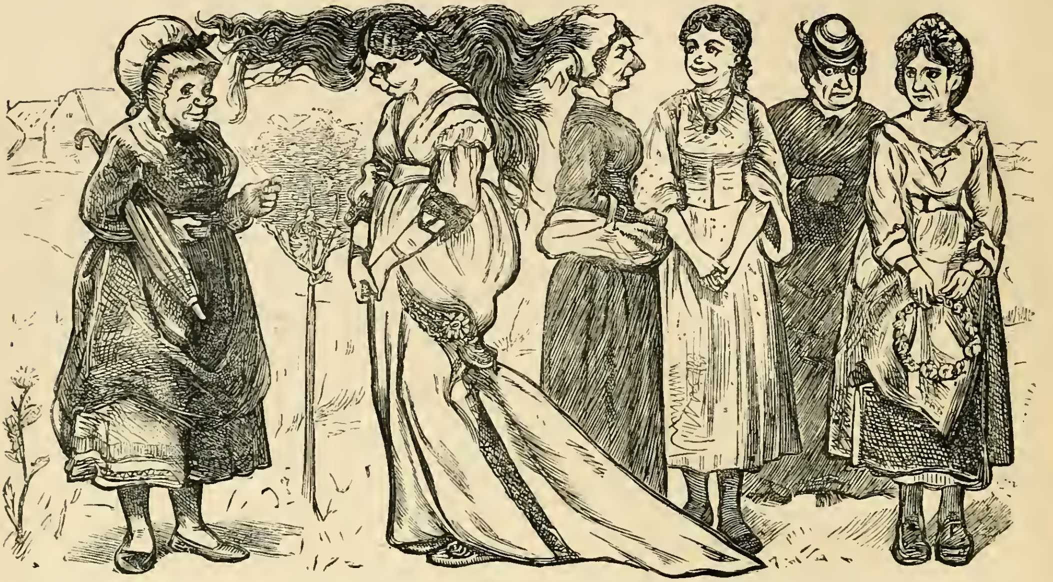
III.

Though your sweetest sunny smiles,
And your winsome girlish wiles,
Right and left you gaily fling,
Merry miss!
From your lips I claim reward—
If you'll graciously accord—
I will clasp the snowy string . . . .
With a kiss.

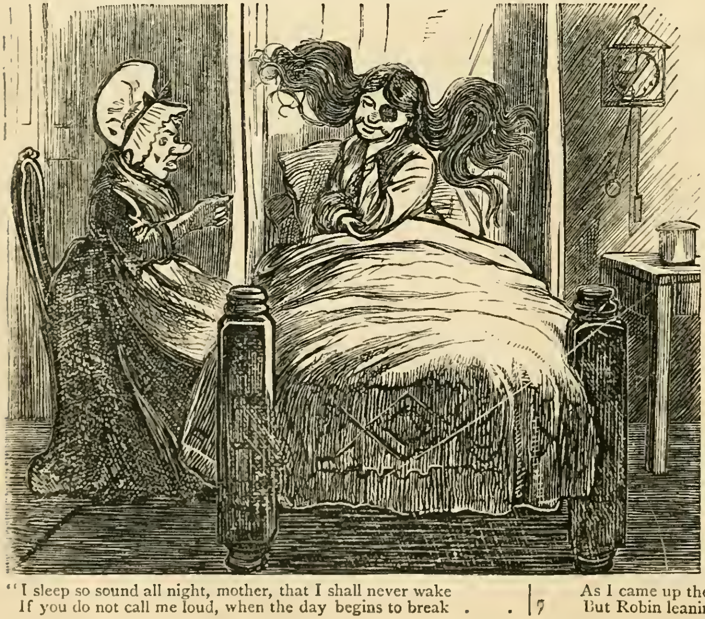
J. ASHBY-STERRY.

THE QUEEN OF THE MAY.

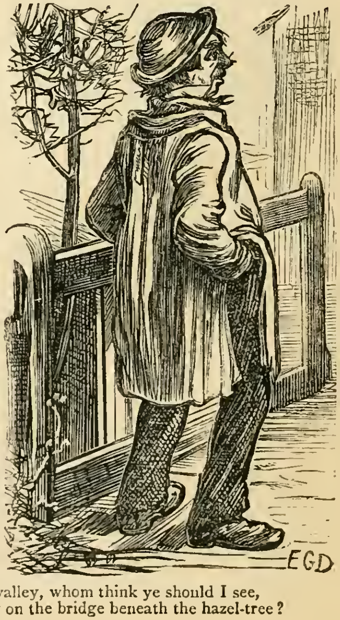
LITERALLY ILLUSTRATED, FROM A REALISTIC POINT OF VIEW.



"There's many a black, black eye, they say, but none so bright as mine:
There's Margaret, and Mary; there's Kate and Caroline;
But none so fair as little Alice in all the land, they say,
So I'm to be Queen of the May, mother, I'm to be Queen of the May!"



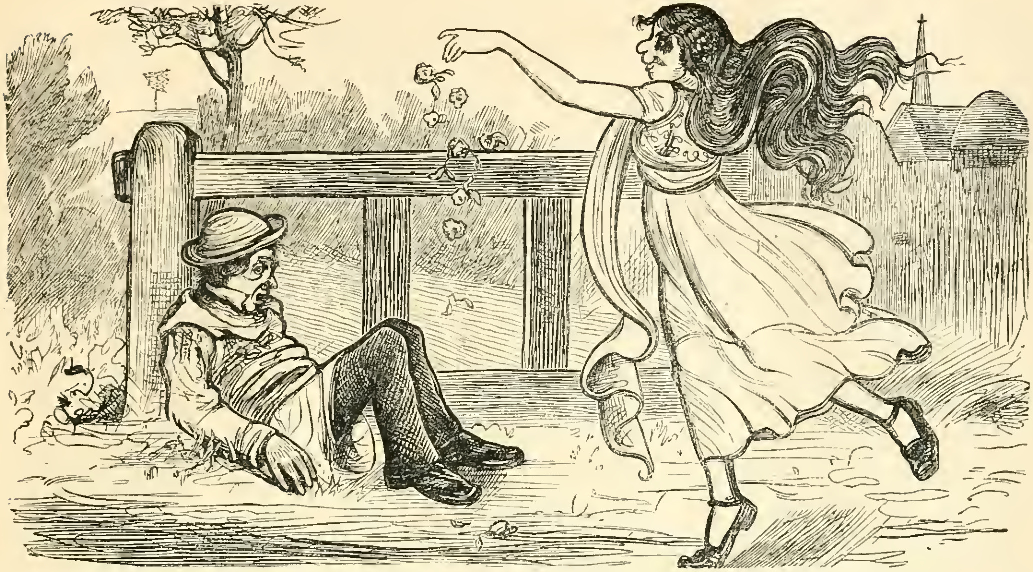
"I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake
If you do not call me loud, when the day begins to break . .



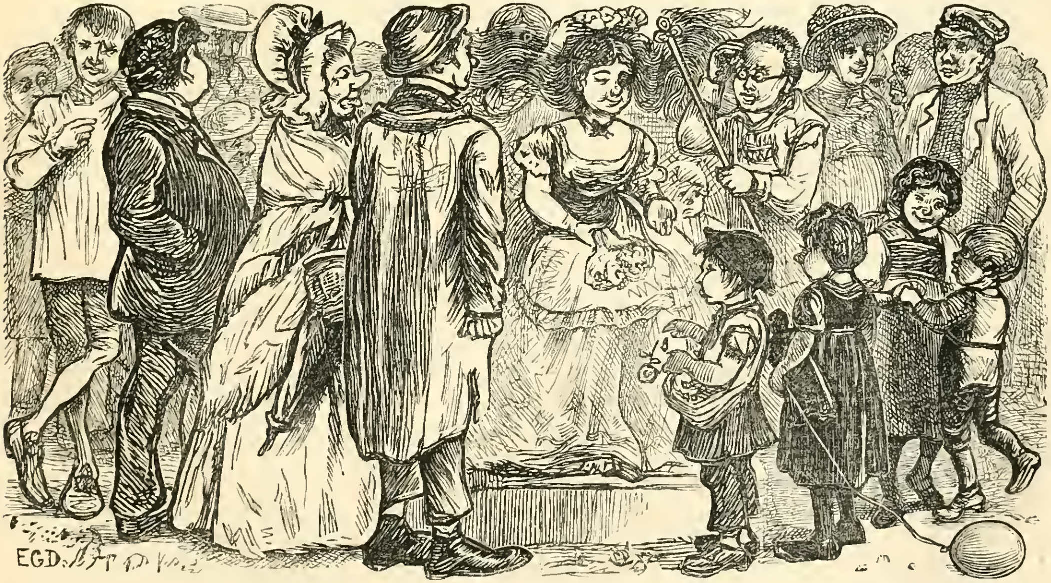
As I came up the valley, whom think ye should I see,
But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree?

THE QUEEN OF THE MAY.

LITERALLY ILLUSTRATED, FROM A REALISTIC POINT OF VIEW.



"He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white;
And I ran by him, without speaking, like a flash of light. . . .
There's many a bolder lad 'll woo me any summer day,
And I'm to be Queen of the May, mother, I'm to be Queen of the May."



"Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,
And you'll be there too, mother, to see me made the Queen;
For the shepherd lads from every side 'll come from far away;
And I'm to be Queen of the May, mother, I'm to be Queen of the May"

THE STORY OF A MAN WITH A "CAST" IN HIS EYE.

I HAVE often thought that, had I a son, and did he show anything like a disposition towards Art, I would make a sculptor of him. Understand me clearly. It is, of course, humanly speaking that I use the term "make." Substantially, we have no power to "make" anything, save love to other people, and fools of ourselves. At all events, I should strive to train the capacity of my potentially gifted son in the direction of sculpture; since I hold that in artistic culture the old saw ascribing the inclination of the tree to the bending of the twig, holds thoroughly good. Nay, more. If you only tie so much as a bit of packthread, in the way of evil example, to the tender shoot, you may find, by the time the twig has become a robust bough, that your *ficelle* has developed into a full-grown halter. Now, the child who manifests a taste for art has before him three roads 'twixt which he may determine on his especial future career: the purely Graphic—if he take that, he will ripen into an engraver or a draughtsman on wood; the Pictorial—if he pursue that path, he will become a painter in oils or water-colours; the Plastic—if that be his chosen road, he will model beautiful little statuettes in wax or terra-cotta, carve majestic busts of brewers or soapboilers who have got into Parliament, or execute in bronze or marble colossal effigies of governors, generals, or great and good princes. There are some children so exceptionally endowed with the art-power and the art-love, that —being additionally favoured, I suppose, with the Three Legs of Man—they are able to follow all the roads simultaneously, and arrive a little out of breath, but still triumphant, at a common goal—(I had nearly written "a common gaol," and the *lapsus calami* might not have mattered much, perhaps, in the long run)—of Fame and Fortune. Such, you will remember, was the case with Michael Angelo and with Edwin Landseer, who alike excelled in drawing, in painting, and in modelling. On the other hand, we often find distinguished painters who cannot sketch the rampant lion in the Royal Arms without a set model, and who could not squeeze a bit of clay into the semblance of a human face, to save their lives. The illustrious Canova, again, once tried his hand at a picture in oils, and a pretty mess he made of it. The thing was called, I think, "La Carità," and resembled nothing half so much as a very feebly coloured bas-relief.

Yes; I would make my son—an I had one—a sculptor. I would take him to Sir Joseph Durham —(who isn't "Sir" Joseph yet, more 's the pity!)— and I would say, "Kind sir, here are a thousand guineas; be pleased to make a sculptor of my son, ere the gay and festive bed-post can twinkle, or the mystic name of Jack Robinson can be pronounced. He has plenty of genius, poetic insight, virtue—*that* he inherited from his papa—and all the rest of the requisites for a sculptor. He only wants application. Teach him to apply; and if he won't learn, larrup him with a mallet, or a chisel, or a pair of compasses, or anything else which you may find in your well-appointed studio convenient to the purpose."

And do you know why above all things I should be desirous for my son—assuming him to exist—to choose the sculptor's craft, in preference to the painter's or the draughtsman's? That he should emulate the renown of Flaxman, or Chantrey, or of Westmacott? Not at all. That he should amass a fortune as large as that of old Joe Nollekens? Scarcely. That he should become a Royal Academician? *Pas le moins du monde.* Anybody in the artistic line can become an R.A. in time, if he pays his rent, wears clean linen, toadies the President, and makes money. I would make a sculptor of my son mainly with the intent that he should get into the best society; and, unless I am very much mistaken, it was in the most exalted, the most refined, and the most exclusive circles—in the very best society, in fine, that my poor old friend John Carrara Phibbs once—alas! that I should say "once"—moved.

The very name of "John Carrara Phibbs" sounds sculpturally, does it not? whereas plain "John Phibbs" might seem to designate a chandler's shopkeeper, or a tide-waiter in the Custom House, or some other mechanical person. But Phibbs's father knew what he was about, and exercised with regard to his son an amount of prevision almost equalling that of the elder Mr. Shandy. His first and infant son was taken (performing the usual Shakspearian vagaries in the nurse's arms) to St. James's Chapel, in the Hampstead Road, and christened as aforementioned, John Carrara. I think the old gentleman fancied that Carrara was the name of a statuary, and not of a place whence statuary marble comes. It is on record that as he quitted the vestry after the christening, he remarked to the clerk—an old chum of his, and many a jorum of punch they had swigged in company at the "Sol's Arms," in the Hampstead Road—that he intended to make a sculptor of his son. The clerk, who was of a practical turn of mind, remembering that St. James's, Hampstead Road, was a succursal of a great West-End parish church, that had been fain to move its burial-ground *extra muros*, rejoined that the sculpturing notion wasn't such a bad one after all, as there was a power of tombstones wanted every year, with death's heads and winged cherubs upon them.

But Phibbs *père* flew at higher, at much higher game. His ambition was akin to the yearning which, in a shadowy and impracticable form, possesses me at this moment. He was anxious that his son should get into "the very best society." Phibbs senior—the truth must be told in Gath—was an actor, a play-actor. It is noteworthy, as proving his upward aspirations, that he always signed himself "John Phibbs, Comedian," and that having been engaged for full five-and-thirty years at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, he seldom omitted to remind you, ere you had been ten minutes in his company, that he was one of His Majesty's servants. If you mentioned people who played at the Haymarket or at Sadler's Wells, he was apt to cry "Oh! ah!" in a disparaging tone, and to murmur something about rogues and vagabonds, in connection with stocks and the whipping-post. Those were the days (I speak of the commencement of the present century) when male and female respectability reigned pre-eminent on the boards, and Phibbs *père*—"Ancient" Phibbs as he was usually known among his *confrères*, from the circumstance of his having once played Pistol, on a benefit night, to Stephen Kemble's "Falstaff"—was a highly respectable man. So respectable as to have been many times during his quarter of a century's occupation of an eight-roomed house at Kentish Town—a little beetle-browed place, half smothered in ivy, and with a bust of Garrick in gilt cork over the door, behind the fanlight—ale-conner, member of the leet-jury, select vestryman, tithing man, parish constable, overseer, and churchwarden. People don't seem to be so respectable now-a-days, and many of the dignities I have glanced at have become obsolete. I am afraid that Phibbs, the benefit-night performance of Ancient Pistol notwithstanding, never rose much higher in his profession than third low comedy, second old men's parts, or "general utility." I think he once played Dawson—or was it Bates?—in "The Gamester." He was once cast for Adam in "As you Like it," but somebody else came up from the York circuit, strongly recommended by Mr. Tate Wilkinson, and poor Phibbs's dream of advancement was rudely dispelled. He continued, not the less, to enjoy the esteem, and, to a certain extent, to command the admiration of his superiors. "He is a credit to the House: he is an honour to the Patent Theatres," the sublime John Kemble was wont, with lofty condescension, to remark. "When that man," the illustrious tragedian would continue, "comes on at the second entrance, and says, 'My Lord, the Coach is at the Door,' you might imagine that he was My Lord himself, just stepped out of his chariot. If Phibbs had been a candle-snuffer, he would have treated tallow dips as though they had been pure wax, at three and sixpence a pound."

Phibbs, subsequent to the birth of the predestined John Carrara, had four children: Tom, whose tendencies were musical; who passed from an early apprenticeship to the big drum in the Covent Garden orchestra to the band of the Royal Horse Guards

Blue (he was a sight on Royal Birthdays, in his golden coat and jack-boots, and with his silver kettledrums slung at the saddle-bows of his milk-white charger with the streaming tail), and who afterwards made a highly respectable end of it as a professor of music to schools and families in the city of Bath. Then there was Bill, who went to sea as cabin-boy to Mr. Slops, purser to H.M. ten-gun brig "Nipcheese," rose himself to be purser, and died, not long ago, very wealthy, in the ships' provision line at Portsea; Emily, who married a highly respectable purveyor of lamp-oil to the Theatres Royal (he was *not* made bankrupt by the introduction of gas, but, on the contrary, acquired a large fortune by the manufacture of fish-tail burners); and Sarah Ann, who, like Tennyson's Dora, "died unmarried," but who was highly respected as the principal of Brunswick House Seminary for Young Ladies, Sophia Dorothea Terrace, Camden Town.

I can't exactly make out what first led old Phibbs to conceive that his eldest son would be a sculptor, yet his forecast in the matter was curiously justified by the event. There was a colour-grinder and white-washer in the painting-room of the theatre, who in his youth had been an assistant to M. Roubiliac, the famous statuary of St. Martin's Lane; and it may be that the stories, &c., "Blocky," as he was termed, used to tell to all who would listen to him, of the dukes and marquises, with their stars and garters, and the lords and baronets, with their swords by their sides, who were wont to come to his patron's studio; of the flasks of burgundy they would quaff with him, and the drums, routs, and ridottos to which their high-born dames would invite him, had fired the brain of Phipps senior, and led him to infer that the highway to the very best society was through modelling-clay and statuary-marble. As things turned out, John Carrara—or Jack, as he came to be called—did really manifest from the earliest age of frills and petticoats a surprising aptitude for the art plastic. One of the first instances of his taste in this direction was manifested on the occasion of the funeral of the immortal Nelson, when Jack could not have been more than seven years old. His father was going to see the procession to St. Paul's, and the child begged very earnestly that he would bring him back one of the medals which were to be thrown on the solemn occasion to the populace. Phibbs senior was not fortunate enough to pick up one of the gilt discs representing Britannia, the British lion, and the Three Graces, weeping over the prostrate hero in the moment of victory; but, on the way home, he happened to pick up, in Hanway Yard, Oxford Street, a plated button bearing the impress of a horse and jockey; and not wishing wholly to disappoint his little boy, who was then in a very delicate and precarious state of health, he ventured to practise an innocent deception upon him, and gave him the button. The young virtuoso received it very thankfully: young as he was, he was fond of examining the seals and trinkets of every watch he saw, and he kept a bit of soft wax, ready to take an impression of any device which specially interested him. You may be sure that he did not omit to obtain an imprint of the Brummagem button with the horse and jockey.*

While still a child, young Jack distinguished himself by modelling figures of cats and dogs in clay and wax, and in a composition, the nature of which he kept to himself, but which was afterwards discovered to be a mixture of putty and sand, and which, hardening, attained almost the durability of stone. He was always carving comical heads, too, out of cherry-stones and bits of slate pencil; and for three successive Christmas pantomimes at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden (being still *sub ferulâ* in Archbishop Tenison's School in St. Martin's parish), did he model all the masks of giants, dwarfs, imps, and Kobbolds of the Enchanted Gold Mine, required by the ingenious Mr. Farley, or by that gentleman's immediate predecessor in the pantomimic line of business. Next did he take to attending the night classes for modelling and drawing from "the round," superintended by old Mr. Pentelicus, in Upper St. Martin's Lane, close to Slaughter's Coffee House. Mr. Pentelicus had been a famous maker of "bustos" in his time. Lord Chancellor Swingscales, in his awful wig and robes, in the Hall of the Inner Carphanaum, is from P.'s pencil; and it was he likewise who designed the colossal monument to Rear-Admiral Brumby in Westminster Abbey, although he was jockeyed out of the commission and its attendant profits by little Monsieur Ragaboche, a French *emigré* sculptor, who had been taken up by the British aristocracy, and, without much merit of his own, had always his hands full of work. "De Anglish he take de French ship," Ragaboche was accustomed, candidly, to say, "but I get de monish. *C'est égal. Trafalgar est vengé.*"

---

* This anecdote, I beg leave to state, for the benefit of the charitable souls who lie in wait to detect Mr. Charles Reade's "plagiarisms," has been transposed from a story in the life of John Flaxman, sculptor.

In his fifteenth year what did the lad do but gain the silver palette offered by the Society for the Encouragement of Arts for the best model of Peace —(or was it War?—I 'm sure I forget)—strangling the hydra-headed serpent of Corsican usurpation. It was shortly after this that the consistent patron of Phibbs Senior, the lofty manager, John Kemble, introduced young John to the notice of the Right Honourable the Earl of Backstairs, a nobleman possessing enormous wealth and, as times went then, a considerable knowledge and appreciation of art. By this great prince the youthful sculptor was at once taken up, and by the Phibbs family, its friends and acquaintances, it was gleefully assumed that young John's fortune was from that moment definitively made and assured.

It might have been so, indeed, for the Right Hon. the Earl of Backstairs was the kindest and the most munificent of patrons. He sent young John to Rome, where he remained four whole years, enjoying during a portion of that time the inestimable advantage of tuition in the studio of the great Thorwaldsen. The even mightier master, Signor Canova, Marchese d'Ischia, was then too old to take pupils, but he frequently complimented the young Englishman on his dexterity in handling not only his modelling tools, but the more onerous mallet and chisel, and was good enough to predict that the very brightest career was in store for him.

It might have been so, indeed, when, about the time of the coronation of George the Fourth, Jack Phibbs returned to England, a bright handsome fellow of three or four-and-twenty. It was in that year's Exhibition of the Royal Academy that his marble group of Venus and Cupid—(Lord Backstairs paid for the marble, which came straight from the quarries of Carrara)—gained golden opinions from all sorts of people, and extorted a tribute of admiration even from the difficult Mr. Hazlitt, the great art-critic of those days. In the following year his *alto-relievo*—"Sleep escaping from the wrath of Jupiter"—took the place of honour in the coal-cellar —('t was there the sculpture used to be shown)—at Somerset House. The work had been bought and paid for long since by his generous patron, but his lordship was only too glad to surrender his purchase to the Russian Prince Shindykoff, who had taken a fancy to it, and to allow young Phibbs to receive the cheque for three hundred guineas drawn in his favour by the Muscovite Boyard, who sadly wanted Jack to come with him to St. Petersburg, promising him introductions to the Imperial family, estates in the Caucasus, the Cross of the Third Class of St. Alexander Nobbski, and what not.

It might have been so indeed if, unhappily, by the time he was thirty years of age, Jack Phibbs had not turned out to be a desperate and irreclaimable scamp. He broke his father and mother's heart to begin with, by bringing home riotous companions at four in the morning, drawing bills upon his fond parents, and inciting them to raise money on their furniture under bills of sale. He borrowed money of his brother Tom, the bandmaster, and would have paid the same compliment to his brother Bill had not that discreet person been, in the first instance, cruising in the Indian Archipelago, and in the next, inexorable in his determination never to lend twopence-halfpenny to anybody. Of the scandal and disorders caused by the "carryings on" of Jack Phibbs, under pretence of teaching drawing and modelling, at the seminary conducted by his sister at Sophia Dorothea Terrace, Camden Town, I will say nothing. In short, there was no end to the wickedness of this abandoned young man. He drank, he smoked (it was considered wicked to smoke in 182—), he had boxed with Tom Cribb, and drunk brandy and water with Jack Thurtell (who was hanged), and for getting into debt and getting out of people's good books he was unequalled. I think that he married a wife: a poor pale little thing, whom he ill treated, and who had a baby and died.

I know that he ran away with Mrs. Lightfoot, of the Surrey Theatre, who had already a husband (paralytic) and five children, and danced on the tight-rope. I know that he was many times insolvent, and once at least bankrupt (only traders could avail themselves of the benefit of the Statutes of Bankruptcy in those days) as a wharfinger, a description he borrowed from the fact that he had once hired a shed on the Horseferry Road, Milbank, as a warehouse for some marble. As to the debtors' prisons of the day, he had been in them all. At the lodge-gates of the Bench, the Fleet, Horsemonger Lane, the Marshalsea, and Whitecross Street, the turnkeys were all familiar with the person of Captain Phibbs—I have never been able to account for the gravitation of gentlemen in difficulties towards the brevet rank of captain—and he was equally well known to the Jewish myrmidons of the spunging houses about Cursitor Street and Blackfriars Road.

Most of these particulars, I do not scruple to admit, I have gathered from hearsay; nevertheless, a good many years ago I did know Jack Phibbs in the flesh. He must at that period have been verging on three-score years—a shabby, shameful, grog-soddened old man, with irreverend white hair, red-lidded eyes, and a moist lip, who would do almost anything that was mean and flagitious for a glass of cold rum and water. He had almost entirely abandoned the practice of his art; and, indeed, his half-palsied hands had rarely sufficient nerve to handle clay, much less marble: so he lived mainly on borrowing loose silver, and promising to execute "your bust." In this last regard, I am fain to admit that his promise occasionally went to the extent of performance; still, the performance was of a very unsatisfactory nature to the patron (usually picked up in the parlour of a tavern) who had been weak-minded enough to commission an effigy of himself; for when Jack Phibbs (generally by the kindly and secret assistance of some old artistic friends) had scrambled through his work, and "your bust" was finished, the unscrupulous sculptor was accustomed to deposit it at the nearest pawnbroker's; and the patron's *amour propre* sometimes, but not always, led him to redeem the unjustifiable pledge. Yet I sometimes fancy that there must be a bust of myself in the keeping of the esteemed Rattleborough family, of Lombard's Alley, to this day.

When I knew the fallen Professor of Plastic Art, he was accustomed to go by a variety of sobriquets. Some people called him "Jamaica" Phibbs, in consequence of his partiality for rum and water cold. By another section of his associates he was known as "Bonaparte" Phibbs: the legend being that one day in the autumn of the year 1821—the precise day, in fact, when the news of the death, at St. Helena, of the great Napoleon arrived in London—a friend of Phibbs met that immoral person at the south-eastern corner of King Street, Covent Garden, and sought to touch his callous heart by telling him that Bonaparte was dead. "Bonaparte be blowed!" (he used a wickeder expletive, I fear) replied the hardened man; "*Can you lend me eighteenpence?*" I cannot believe, however, that this anecdote really refers to Phibbs, since you will recollect that it was in 1821 that his Highness Prince Shindykoff purchased his bas-relief of "Sleep flying from the wrath of Jupiter." Yet have I been told of persons with very large incomes indeed who were in occasional want of eighteenpence, and exhibited not the slightest scruple in borrowing that sum.

On the whole—passing by his nicknames of "Liar," "Buffy," and "Mouldy"—I am inclined to think that it was as "Gallows" Phibbs that the degraded artist was best known. And this name he seems to have owed to a very curious adventure, which befell him some time between 1825 and 1829, when he was still young, but had commenced his downhill career of profligacy and idleness. He had been driven by necessity to accept the derogatory position of modeller in ordinary to the proprietor of a large travelling waxwork show. This was long before the time when a "chamber of horrors" was added, as a special attraction, to Madame Tussaud's exhibition; nevertheless the effigies of notorious criminals as they lived (and murdered) were very common adjuncts to travelling galleries of waxwork, and it was part of Jack Phibbs's functions (for a salary of three pounds a week and his expenses) to travel about the country in the wake of the Judges of Assize, and take casts in plaster of the countenances of conspicuous malefactors, which had been prepared for plastic treatment by another artist—an artist not in clay, not in wax, not in marble, but in hemp, and whose name was Cheshire, commonly hight "Jack." He was a very perfect Hangman, and the immediate predecessor of the present accomplished wearer of the Ketchian laurels, Mr. Calcraft. Oddly enough, although Jack Phibbs had, in the course of his practice, taken casts from the faces of scores of murderers, highwaymen, and forgers (he executed, by the way, a charming portrait figure of his old acquaintance, Mr. Thurtell), he had never seen a man hanged, and he had never yet set eyes on the public executioner. For it was the custom of Mr. Cheshire, when his morning's work had been executed in a skilful and workmanlike manner, to withdraw himself from the public gaze, and, in the interior of the prison, and in the company of his assistant and a turnkey or two, to comfort himself with brandy and tobacco, to the smoothing of his spirits, which had been sometimes ruffled by a hooting populace addicted to throwing dead cats and other objectionable objects at the head of the zealous and devoted official who, at so much personal risk and self-sacrifice, came forward to fulfil the last dread behests of the law. Jack Phibbs would never go near the gaol until the full hour prescribed by law had expired; and then, provided with his order from the High Sheriff, and his necessary tools and plaster, he would perform his spiriting as gently as might be. A nice thing it was for the pupil of Thorwaldsen and the *protegé* of the Right Honourable the Earl of Backstairs—for a man who had exhibited at the Royal Academy, and moved in the very best society, to come down to. But needs must when the devil —that is to say, Idleness and Profligacy: I don't know of any other fiends—drives.

When Mr. Crookfinger, the celebrated will-forger —he was quite the gentleman, rode to hounds, married the daughter of a rural dean, and had some of the best Curaçao in England—was hanged, in the year 182—, at Winchester, Jack Cheshire, you may rest assured, was there; and Jack Phibbs, with his spatulæ and his plaster of Paris was not far behind him. It was rather a busy time with both artists, for just three days after the finishing of Mr. Crookfinger, the completing touch was to be put to the career of the renowned Mr. Hydrag, who had poisoned his stepmother, two of his aunts, and his mother-in-law down in Devonshire. He was convicted, but, strangely enough, the jury omitted to recommend him to mercy; and Mr. Hydrag (his waxen effigy, after the punishment of death for forgery was abolished, and with the addition of a sallow complexion and a beard and moustaches, did duty as Fieschi, the assassin of the Infernal Machine) was, by the presiding Judge at the Exeter Assizes, left for death. Thus it came about that on a certain Sunday evening Jack Phibbs, having just been dropped from the roof of the Great Western mail-coach, found himself in the ancient and venerable city of Exeter, in quest of supper and a bed, and with a lively remembrance that he had an appointment with the countenance of Mr. Hydrag at nine o'clock on the following Monday morning, the rendezvous of the criminal with Mr. Cheshire being fixed for eight a.m.

The Western Assizes having just been brought to a satisfactory consummation, by several culprits (Mr. Hydrag, the poisoner, among the number) being comfortably "left for death," it happened that the picturesque and venerable city of Exeter was very full; for although the Judges and the leading counsel had taken their departure to hold more Assizes down in Cornwall, with the benevolent intent of ascertaining whether there was anybody in the remote regions of the Land's End to whom a little hanging would do any good, a considerable number of the junior members of the Bar had lingered behind for the laudable purpose of improving their acquaintance with the county families, to whose feminine and beauteous scions they had been presented at the assize ball. What ill-conditioned curmudgeon was it, I wonder, who put a stop to those pleasurable réunions? That a ball should wind up a commission of Oyer and Terminer, and that a general gaol delivery should be followed by Sir Roger de Coverley, could surely do no harm to the luckless individual in the condemned hold against whose name there was written in the calendar the lamentable epitaph of "*Sus. per coll.*" Nay; hanging has itself been qualified as "dancing upon nothing;" thus the connection between the *gavotte* and the gallows may be closer than at the first blush might be imagined.

At any rate, Exeter was very full on the precise Sunday evening in the year 182— of which I speak. The country people had flocked into the city in great numbers for the purpose of seeing Mr. Hydrag hanged, and Jack Phibbs had the very greatest difficulty in obtaining a bed. A small carpet bag held all his needments in the way of plaster of Paris and modelling tools; and for this reason, perchance, or it may be because they did not approve of his personal appearance—which, it must be owned, had grown somewhat shabby and dissipated-looking of late—the landladies of the big hotels would have nothing to say to him. For well-to-do landladies have an unconquerable aversion to travellers who have very little luggage with them; whence it follows, as a rule, that the bigger the swindler who goes about the country bilking innkeepers, the more voluminous are the trunks and portmanteaus—full of bricks and back numbers of the penny papers, mainly—he carries with him.

At length the belated sculptor stumbled on a humble little hostelry, half inn, half beershop, situated in a narrow passage behind the cathedral close, by the sign, let us say, of the "Bold Dragoon." The landlady, a civil personage enough, and seemingly not unaccustomed to guests who carried their belongings in a hand-bag, or even in the humbler form of a bundle, told Jack that she would do what she could for him, but that the maximum of sleeping accommodation she could place at his disposal did not extend beyond the moiety of a double-bedded room, the room in question being the back attic. The rest of her house, she added, using a professional phrase, was "full to the bung." She explained, however, that the attic was a very nice one—the nicest, perhaps, in the house, barring the best bedroom, which was that night occupied by one of the largest pig-jobbers in the county of Devon; that the bed she was enabled to offer Jack was as clean as a new pin, and "as soft as a pocket of new-picked 'ops;" and, finally, that the other bed would be "slep' in" by a gentleman "as was a puffick gentleman, and as quiet as a lamb, which she had known him years and years, and was no more given to snorin' nor chokin' hisself in his sleep than a newborn infant." What more could she say? What, indeed! The man who could have objected to accept the half of a double-bedded room after such a recommendation must indeed have been difficult to please; although Jack, as he struck a bargain for the tenancy of the highly-lauded couch, could not help remembering that infants of tender years, if indeed they rarely snored, were not unfrequently given to choking themselves in their sleep in a manner not wholly pleasant to the ears of those unfortunate enough to be their bedfellows. Jack Phibbs, however, was a philosopher, albeit a scampish one. He paid the landlady five shillings in advance to begin with—a step which did not fail to propitiate the good woman; and then he ordered his supper, and, after partaking of a substantial repast of cold roast beef and pickles, washed down by a pint or two of ale (people were not afraid of supping in 182—), he took his usual allowance of grog and tobacco—that is to say, a good deal more than was good for him,—and about midnight announced his intention of retiring to the peerless bed in the back attic, which was as clean as a new pin, and as soft as a pocket of hops. He asked the grimy maiden with excoriated elbows who officiated as boots, waitress, and chambermaid, all in one, to the "Bold Dragoon," if the gentleman who was to be his fellow-lodger had returned.

"Yer means the old 'un," responded the grimy maiden. "No, he ain't. He 's ginerally late."

"Ah! he 's an old gentleman, is he? Farmer, perhaps. Sits late over his pipe," the sculptor mentally remarked. "Never mind, Judy"—the grimy maiden looked as though her name could only have been Judy—he continued aloud; "I 'm very sleepy, and I dare say the old 'un won't wake me up when he *does* turn in." He hesitated for a moment whether he should chuck the assumed Judy under the chin, his custom always of an evening with chambermaids, but confessing that she was a little too grimy even for that modified form of caress, concluded to let her alone, and limited himself to bidding her be sure to call him not later than half-past seven the next morning, promising her, in case of punctuality, the magnificent sum of sixpence as a recompense. So

Judy grinned a grimy grin, and duly promised, and Jack Phibbs walked—I am afraid that he staggered a little—up to bed.

The famous double-bedded chamber was a pokey little attic, with a shelving roof and a dormer window with lattice-panes in the centre. On each side of the casement was a truckle bed, and by the side of each pallet a bare deal table and a rush-bottomed chair. Everything was clean enough; and Jack's bed, although it bore no very great resemblance to a pocket of new-picked hops, was furnished with sheets scented not unpleasantly with lavender. Before, however, he retired to his couch, the sculptor unpacked his bag, principally for the purpose of getting at his comb and brush, which articles lay at the bottom of his *sac de nuit*, and by the time he had fished them out, he felt too tired to replace the remaining contents of the bag, which lay scattered about the table. There, for example, was a bag full of plaster of Paris in powder; there, a large sponge; there, a bundle of brushes and modelling tools; and there, wrapped up in a crimson silk pocket-handkerchief, was the cast of the head of the man who had been hanged at Winchester three days before.

Oddly enough—(although, I dare say, the same odd thing has happened to most of us when over-fatigued, lying in a strange bed and with the uneasy consciousness of having something disagreeable to do the next morning)—when Jack had extinguished the rushlight and ensconced himself between the lavender-scented sheets, he found that he could not sleep a wink. In vain he turned from side to side, rearranged the bed-clothes, and pounded the pillow over and over again—in vain he tried to count to eleven hundred and eighty, to repeat "Mesopotamia's merchandise is not manufactured," with other devices too numerous to specify, prescribed as infallible remedies against insomnia. At length, he remembered that he had a pipe and a small quantity of tobacco in his bag, and that there was a box of matches on the table; but just as he had made up his mind to jump out of bed and try the efficacy of a final smoke, he heard a heavy footstep on the stairs. Then the door creaked on its hinges, and somebody bearing a light entered the attic.

"This must be the old 'un," murmured Jack to himself. "Let's lie quiet, and see what kind of a bird he is. Halloa! I think he's been in the same boat with me. He's had enough grog to-night, that's certain."

To judge from the desperate but impotent efforts made by the stranger, when he had staggered to the bed and sate down thereupon, to pull off his boots, he had apparently consumed that evening not merely a sufficiency, but a decided superabundance, of alcoholic fluids. Yet are there certainly cases in which a gentleman of perfectly sober habits may be suffering under the affliction of tight boots, and may be consequently impelled to pant, to groan, to perspire, and at length to utter maledictions not only loud but deep. It was only after a series of the most furious muscular struggles that Jack's fellow-lodger succeeded in ridding himself from the integumental impediments; and yet, when he *had* taken them off, the sculptor could not help thinking that he had rarely seen such very wide and roomy boots—heavy, square-toed, and with the tops of the configuration and hue known as "mahoganies" or "pickle-jars."

"A farmer evidently," the sculptor inwardly opined, as his room-mate proceeded more or less unsteadily to divest himself of a blue frock coat, with brass buttons, and a striped grogram waistcoat —"a farmer, and as drunk as David's sow."

The "old 'un"—he was a stout man of about sixty years of age, with a hard, weather-beaten countenance, bushy grey eyebrows, scanty tufts of grey whiskers on either cheek-bone, and a ring of grey hair, almost resembling that worn by monks, round his otherwise bald scalp—had obviously an additional garment of which to divest himself ere he retired to repose; but I am absolved from the painful necessity of mentioning the nature of that article in question, since the Fates so willed it that he undressed himself no more in Jack's presence that night. For the "old 'un" suddenly took it into his head to creep in his stocking-feet to the foot of Jack's bed, and, shading the candle, which he held in one hand, with the palm of the other, to look intently on his fellow-lodger's face. Jack, willing to humour the eccentric old gentleman, remained perfectly still, counterfeiting deep slumber. By-and-bye, the "old 'un" turned his candle to the table where lay the contents of Jack's bag, and he began to fumble at the crimson silk pocket-handkerchief in which was wrapped——

You know what was wrapped in that kerchief. So soon as ever the eyes of the old gentleman—who was such a perfect gentleman—lighted on that which was beneath the silken envelope, he uttered a most hideous and appalling yell, and rushed, all bootless, vestless, and coatless as he was, from the room and downstairs, roaring "murder!" the whole way.

And this was the way in which the dissolute sculptor, who ought to have got into such very good society, but who, on the contrary, contrived to mingle with such very disreputable associates, acquired the *sobriquet* of "Gallows" Phibbs. No explanation, he was wont to say, could be obtained respecting the mysterious lodger from Judy, when she came up to fetch the mahogany tops and the remaining garments abandoned by the stranger; but the landlady confessed the next morning, not without many expressions of repentance, the entire truth. She had made bold, she said, to put the sculptor in the same room with a gentleman who was a very old customer of hers, and who never failed to patronize her when business matters brought him down to that part of the country. That gentleman's name was Cheshire. He was ordinarily known as Jack Cheshire, and he was the public hangman.

Jack Phibbs's cast of the head of the gentleman who had been hanged at Winchester must have been a very life-like—or, rather a very death-like—one; since the bare sight of it had led the executioner to imagine that he recognized an old acquaintance—an old acquaintance of three days previously—an old acquaintance of the scaffold, the gibbet, and the drop. Jack Ketch, I suppose, is not exempt from the accident of seeing ghosts sometimes, or, at least, of being half frightened out of his senses when he fancies that he sees them.

George Augustus Sala.

MISS MILES, THE TELEGRAPH GIRL.

Thy heart is like some icy lake,
On whose cold brink I stand;
Oh, buckle on my spirit's skate,
And take me by the hand!

And lead, thou living saint, the way
To where the ice is thin,
That it may break beneath my feet,
And let a lover in.

Spiritualistic Poetry.

SINCE Soul first basked in Passion's sun,
I always ran to seed
In seeking One who'd gone and done
Some great heroic deed;
And deemed I'd found Life's Earnest Truth
In Gloriana Green,
Who engineered a bonnet shop,
And bossed a sewing machine.

But as the rose of morning fades
Before the fire of noon,
Or sparrows yield in sylvan glades
To mocking-birds in June,
My Gloriana's stock went down—
Its wheat all turned to chaff—
When I got in with Mary Miles,
Who ran the telegraph.

Her brow betokened serious life;
I knew my final queen;
A soul divine in gaiter-boots,
A Dream in crinoline.
Her parasol a glory seemed
Around a vivid saint,
The whole one spirit-photograph
Illumed with heavenly paint.

And thus she lifted up her voice,
That mission-mantled maid;
And thus she spoke with golden grace,
And sacredly she said—
A-pointing at me all the time
With that same parasol,
The light which gleams from silent lands
Around her seemed to fall—

"You've told of great and holy deeds—
I s'pose they all are true—
But in our telegraphic line
We've some adventures, too;
And though I do not like to boast
Of what I ever done,
One thing my Moral Consciousness
Declares was Number One.

"Last Fall I was in Tennessee
A-travelling might and main,
When all at once the engine broke—
They couldn't run the train;
And if another train should come
'T would rather make us scream."
List to the glorious deed she did,
This angel of my dream.

"I saw a telegraphic line
Was running by our *rout*,
Though not a house or a machine
Was anywhere about.
And the conductor said, said he,
With his wild eyes of light:
'Miss Miles, if we'd a battery,
I'd fix this scrape all right.

"'I'd send 'em down a telegram
Some twenty miles below,
And ask for help.' I looked at him—
'I'll fix the business, Joe.
Is there a pair of nippers here?
If so, those nippers bring;
And if you can't, a sharp-edged file
Would be a heaven-sent thing.'"

"Unshadowed girl! I see the dodge,"
I cried in rapturous joy;
"And didst thou climb the post thyself?"
Said she, "I did, my boy.
A higher law of moral truth
Gave courage to my soul;
I did not show my garters once
In going up the pole.

"No poet ever felt such thrills
In touching of his lyre
As I did when I found there came
A message through the wire.
That wire I cut, and 'tween my teeth
I held it—ay, with pride,—
And with my tongue the current clicked
To the wire on t' other side.

"On one side came the message in
From some man in New York:
'*Buy if you can, at ninety-five,
Five thousand sides of pork.*'
And this same electricity
I changed as in a flash:
'*Send down an engine right away,
Or we shall go to smash.*'

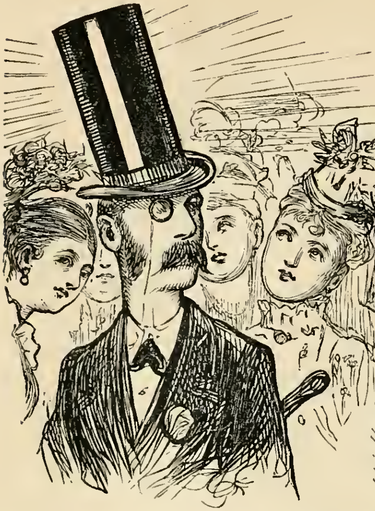
"The engine came, and all were saved—
Yet Life is but a Dream.
I live—thou livest in a cloud:
We are not what we seem.
Still craving for the Infinite
In Time's ideal lodge,
I grasped a Truth—yet after all
'T was but an earthly dodge."

I gazed upon that spirit grand,
Upon my knees I sank,
And from mine eyes the burning sand
The scalding tear-drops drank.
Then soft she smiled: "If deeds like this
Can yield such victory,
And I am in your line, my love,
Then, love, I yield to thee."

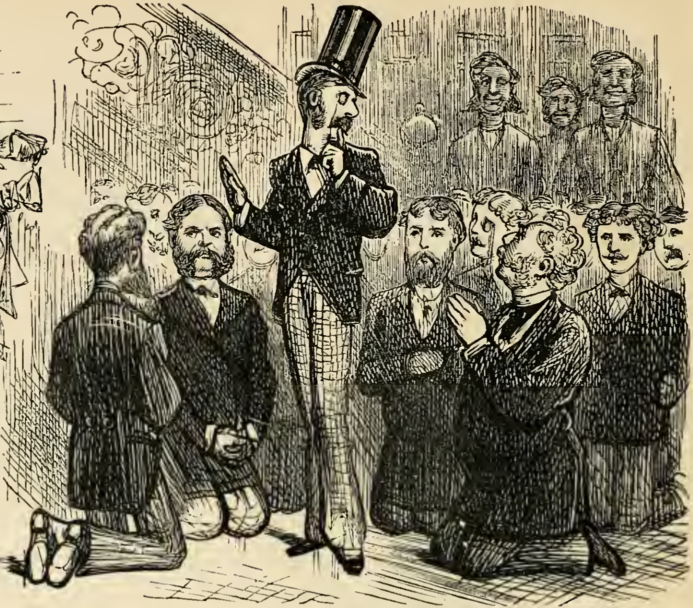
Ho, maidens of Vienna's show!
Ho, matrons of Lucerne!
Look out for us next summer, when
We give your shop a turn.
I have won my soul's ideal,
I have booked her for a wife;
And the Fancy and the Real
Are united in my life.

CHARLES G. LELAND.

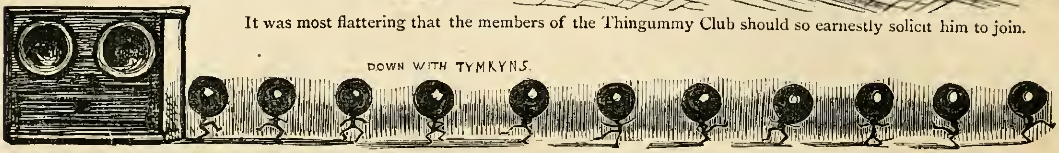
TYMKYNS AND HIS HATS: A TRUE STORY OF CLUB LIFE.



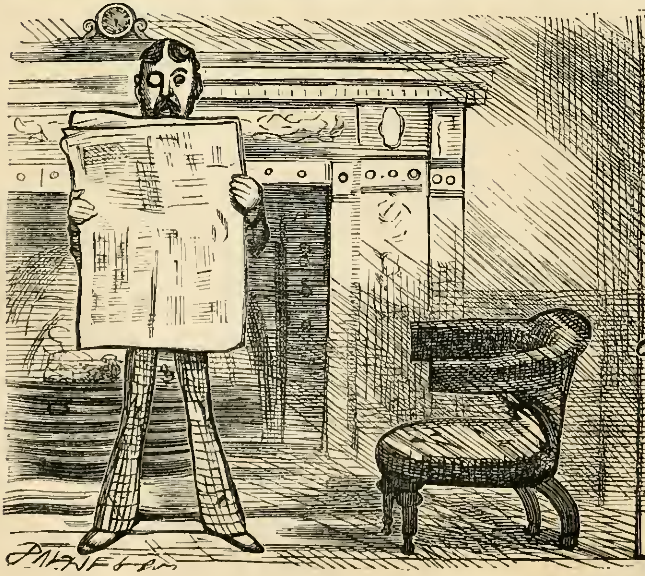
If there was one thing Tymkyns prided himself on, it was his hat—though it was a noosance, don't you know, that girls would follow him to see themselves in it.



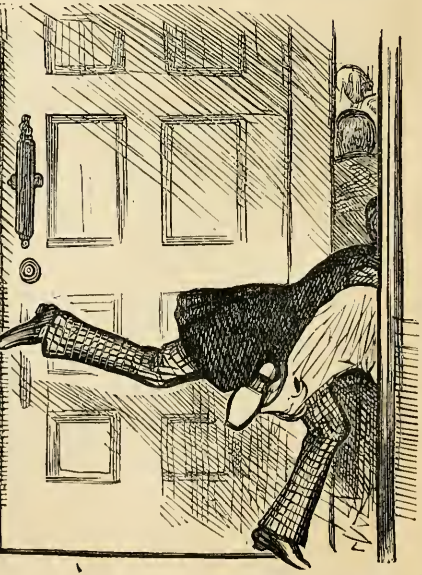
It was most flattering that the members of the Thingummy Club should so earnestly solicit him to join.


DOWN WITH TYMKYNS.

Great was the excitement among the black balls when they knew Tymkyns was "up."

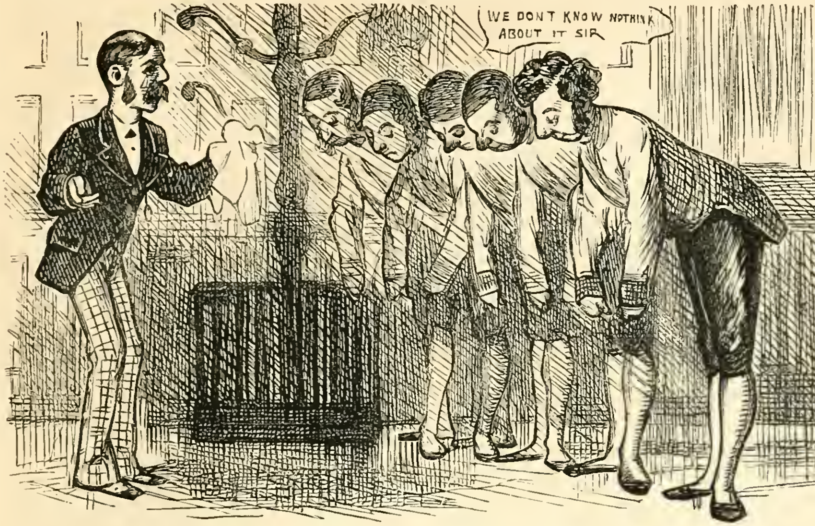


Tymkyns was elected, however. Hooray!

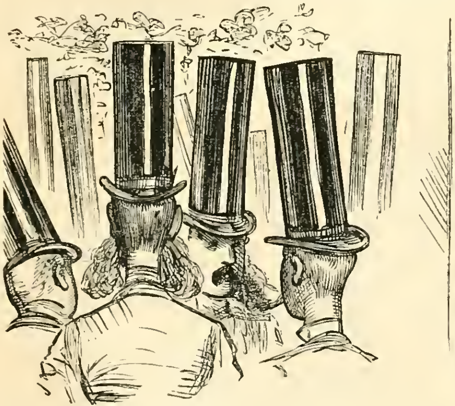


Now, it was rather curious that, whenever he dropped in, this should happen.

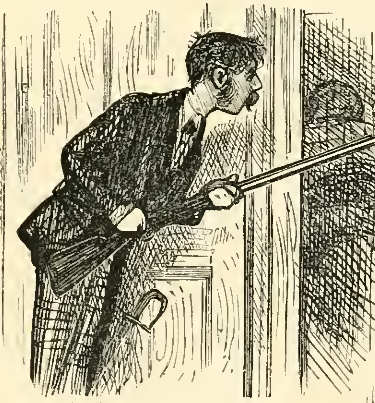
TYMKYNS AND HIS HATS: A TRUE STORY OF CLUB LIFE.


WE DONT KNOW NOTHINK ABOUT IT SIR

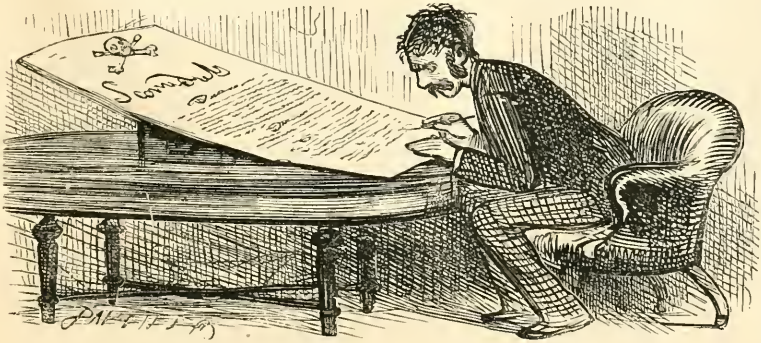
And it was still more curious that he was always unable to find his hat.



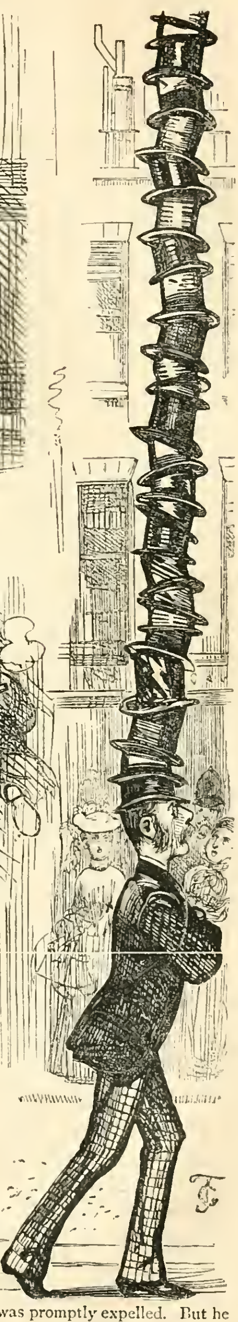
When this had occurred pretty considerably, he met his hats wherever he went.



He began to feel annoyed,



And when the committee expostulated, he wrote them a little note,



And was promptly expelled. But he had his revenge—ha, ha! And the members of the Thingummy Club gnashed their teeth, and caught colds in their heads exceedingly!

TURKEY IN FRANCE.

WE must have a turkey—that was certain—in order to maintain some semblance of Christmas in our temporary home at D——, on the coast of Normandy. We knew that *rosbif* would not serve our turn, and that *plum-bouding* was only a batter pudding made in a basin with some raisins in the bottom; but about a turkey we felt there should be no difficulty, for on any market-day you could see helpless gobblers reposing at the feet of the stall-women among small mobs of chickens, geese, and ducks, all similarly hobbled—so a turkey we determined it should be.

We placed ourselves in communication with Monsieur who supplied us with our milk and butter, and who had an unmistakeable country air about him, though at times his milk was not entirely beyond a suspicion of water, with which, as we happened to reside outside the *octroi*, he could safely supplement our supplies. He was all bows and smiles when we consulted and laid our plans before him. "A turkey—yes, certainly!—yes, without doubt!"—and away he went, leaving us in the full belief that we had done all that was necessary for our Christmas feast.

This delusive state of contentment was not fated to last long, however! One day, about a fortnight before Christmas, on our return from shopping, Madame, our French *bonne*, led us with much ceremony to the coal-cellar. There, seated on the edge of the coal-bin, in gloomy and ruffled grandeur sat—the turkey! A live turkey is not a prepossessing bird at the best of times. I have often thought that he was selected as one of the dishes for Christmas, because his wattles gave him the gorged and bottle-nosed appearance of a *bon vivant*, whose fate might be a warning against the excesses of that essentially gormandizing season.

Madame explained that Monsieur the milkman had brought the turkey thus early because about Christmas-time the captains of the English boats bought up all the gobblers in the vicinity. It was rather like an implied admission that we had better have the bird at once, because, if any one came by and offered Monsieur a few sous more than we had bargained for, his honesty would have been shaken, and our claims sacrificed. With a great regard for French people, I cannot conceal from myself the knowledge that a bargain made with them is only a bargain so long as nobody else makes a higher bid. *Par exemple*, a carriage especially ordered three days before, to take us to see a grand wedding, did not turn up at the appointed hour; and it was only on sending down to hasten it that we learnt it was not coming at all, because the proprietor had hired it out to somebody else!

However, to our turkey. There sat the solemn bird on the edge of the coal-bin. To any blandishments addressed to it in English it responded with that superb contempt which dogs, cats, birds, and horses on the Continent display towards the barbarous tongue. Before long we discovered that our new acquisition declined to eat. Perhaps he wished to starve himself, rather than become a meal for the despised foreigner. We tried all sorts of things, but he still sat in solemn dignity on the edge of the coal-bin, and refused to take any notice of the tid-bits.

The coal-cellar certainly smacked somewhat of the "lowest dungeon beneath the castle moat;" so we determined to try if he would be more agreeable in the open air. Accordingly, he was led forth—still attached to a cord round his leg—to the pump. It did not induce him to eat, but it somewhat interfered with our facilities for drinking; for he showed a manifest dislike to any one drawing water, which we could only attribute to his disapproval of the way in which his late owner had been in the habit of adulterating the milk.

After some time, our captive so far relented as to take a frugal but refreshing repast of apple-parings. He next condescended to oats, and after that, his reserve or pride having been once broken down, became fairly omnivorous. At night the pump used to be released, and the turkey was led to his roost on the edge of the coal-bin.

Our house was built at the foot of an abrupt slope, up which the garden had to climb, holding on with teeth and nails. After a heavy shower of rain, it was not altogether unusual to find that some of the plants from the top bed had come down to make acquaintance with the back door. The only things that held on were the snails; and they held on in considerable numbers. We used to collect them in baskets, to give to the poor; but the poor somehow never seemed to care to come and fetch them. We kept a few fowls, which had the freedom of this precipice, and used to toil up it tediously, and come down with a flop, by merely letting go when they were at the summit. It was a family belief that if any of them ever laid, the egg used to roll down the declivity and across the road into the front gate of the opposite house; but the conjecture was never established as a fact, the fowls being of French extraction, and therefore declining to converse with us English.

I have described the garden thus lengthily, because it was the scene of an escapade, in which the turkey was the central figure. One morning, "squauks" were heard issuing from the garden. A glance from the window told the reason. Somebody had left the coal-cellar door open, and the turkey had marched forth to survey the premises. Whether he recognized the fowls as fellow-creatures, and desired companionship, or was pursuing them with murderous purpose, it is impossible to say. At any rate, they did not like the look of him, and were rushing about in dire alarm, and with much cackling. It was raining pretty heavily at the time; and the next moment I saw Madame, with a green umbrella, toiling up the steep like a verdant mushroom. Madame's *sabots* completed the picture. Whenever I read in the Tichborne case that Arthur Orton "threw his feet about," there rises to my mind's eye the figure of Madame shedding a *sabot* at every other step. If you don't believe this, dear reader, buy, beg, borrow, or steal a pair of *sabots*, and then try and climb a perpendicular wall in them. Please invite me to be present at the experiment.—But I am wandering, like the turkey. Fate, the green umbrella, and the *sabots* closed in upon him, the truant was recaptured, and once again bound apprentice to the pump.

There was one consolation! It was about time that the career of this singular bird should be brought to a close. But the consolation only concealed a difficulty. A domestic council was held, the members of which singly and severally pleaded—with as much shame as if it was an admission of murder—that they had never killed a turkey, and did not know how it should be done. And all the time there sat the bird on the pump-trough, gazing in upon us with an almost triumphant air. It irritated all of us; but when it was hinted that he was a sort of invader who had got the upper hand of us, and had "like a Prussian" seized on the Alsace of our pump, and the Lorraine of our coal-bin, Madame made up her mind to be the death of him somehow. As I said just now, I do not know how to kill a turkey, but cutting his throat with a pair of scissors does not strike me as likely to be the usual way.

But I will not reveal how he was eventually slaughtered. If you can in any dim way guess at it from some remark I may have dropped, you are welcome to do so. I drop a curtain over the final tragedy, in accordance with the proper dramatic rules:

> Ne pueros coram populo Medea trucidet.

Half an hour later, what showmen call "a decapitated head" lay on a table in the kitchen. It was not an optical illusion, but that head, still retaining its resemblance to a rosy-gilled bottle-nosed old roisterer, winked its eye at me as I gazed upon it.

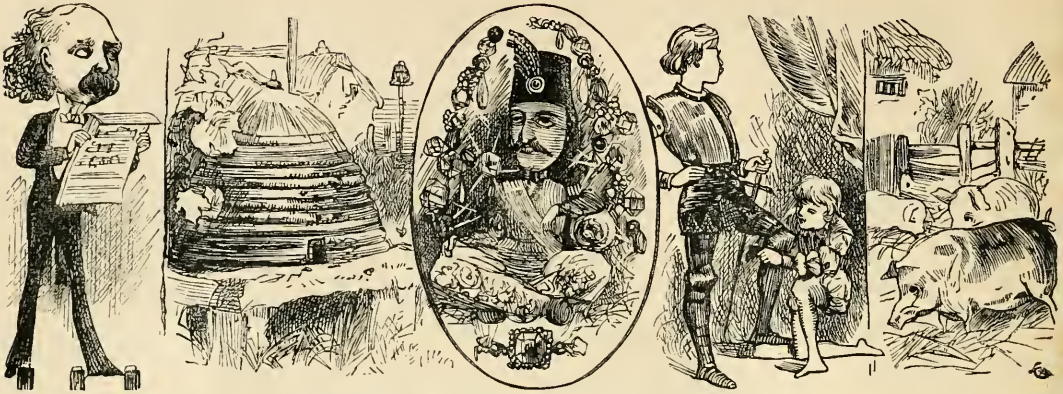
We arrived, on Christmas Day, at the conclusion that pumps and apple-parings were not the most nutritious diet for turkeys. He was thin. More than that, he was tough. Furthermore, his flesh was not white—I believe he used to eat the coals, because he knew they were fifty francs a ton.

And Monsieur the milkman still comes and bows, and is so pleasant. But the shadow of that turkey lies between us, and, as somebody said of another bird quite as unfitted for human consumption—

> And my soul from out that shadow . . . .
> Shall be lifted nevermore.

T. Hood.

WALNUTS FOR WISDOM TEETH.



PICTORIAL PERSIAN DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

⁂ The chief words are in the centre picture, the steps on either side.

GIVE-'EM-UPS.

Why is a waggon with the owner's name on the tilt like an American humourist?—Because it is a Markt Wain.

When is a clock like an idea?—When it suddenly strikes one.

If a raven were going to prey on a dead sow, why would he travel by the Walworth Road?—Because it would take him to Peckham.

CHARADE.

My First is a sort of a shell,
You have but your nose to pursue;
My Second the waves as they swell,
To the reefs and headlands do.
My Whole's an assembly, whereat
Kings, bishops, and nobles have sat.

CHARADE.

My First part ran,
My Second 's Dan,
My Whole 's a kind of rowing plan.

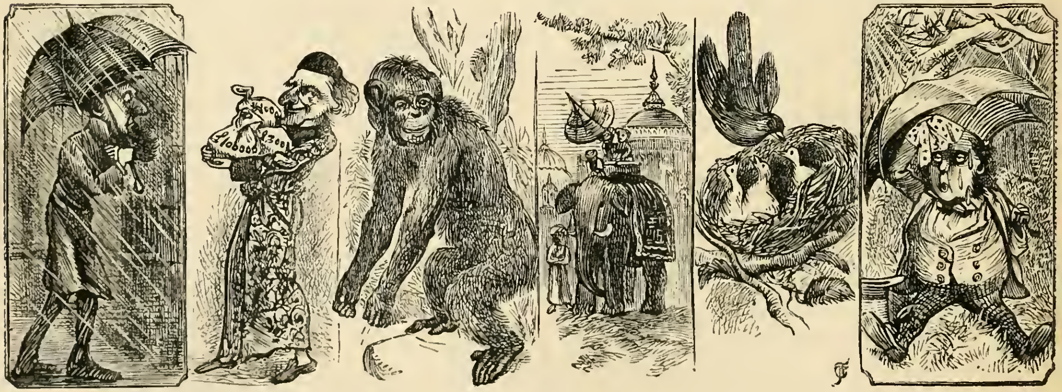
DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

If winter is chilly,
'T will drive us half silly,
To see how the prices go up, willy-nilly.

1. She cost twelve pound a year
All found except beer.
2. A ha'p'orth of news,
And rather odd views.
3. A land where they make
A chief a great sheik.
4. That impudent man
Who courts your Mary Ann.

RIDDLES.

1. Why is the present price of coal like Republicanism?
2. Why should you always take apartments in a timber-built house
3. When is a briefless counsel like an overladen ship



PICTORIAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

⁂ The chief words will be found one at each end, the intervening pictures giving the steps.

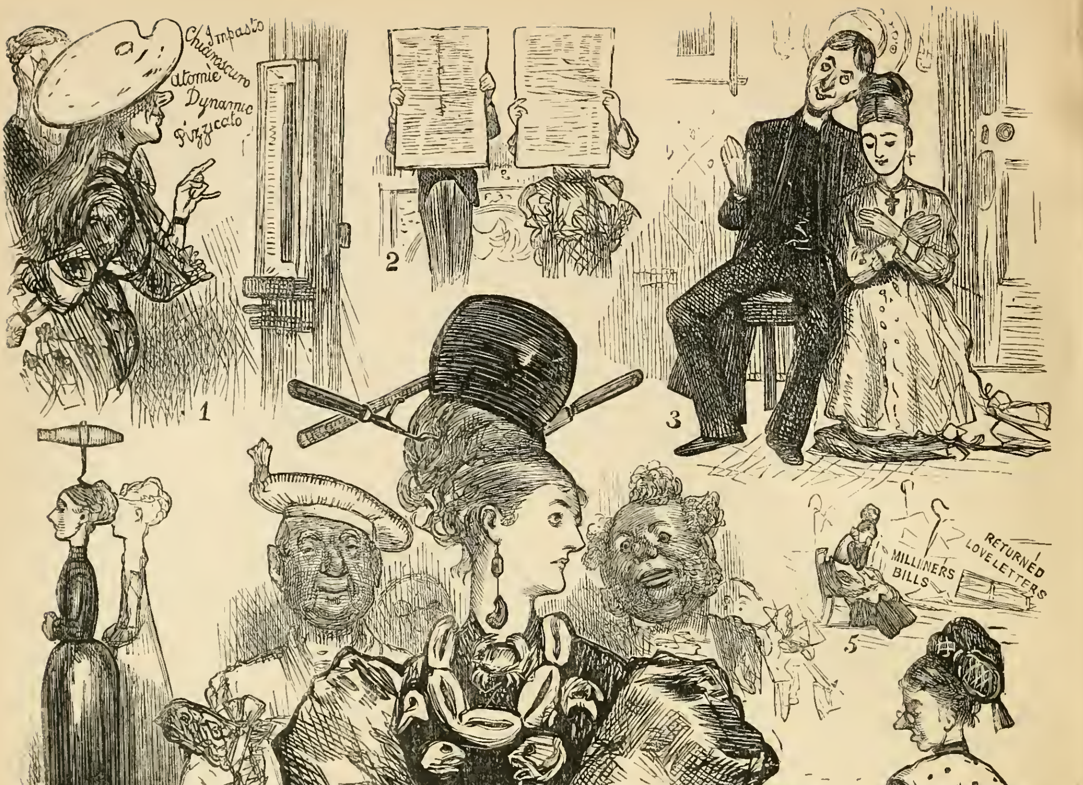
Notice.—The Solutions of the Puzzles will be given in the Christmas Number of Fun. No Answers will be received after 15th December.

Printed by Dalziel Brothers, Camden Press, London, N.W.

FUN

EVERY WEDNESDAY.

ONE PENNY.


Impasto
Chiaroscuro
Atomic
Dynamic
Pizzicato
1
2
3
RETURNED LOVE LETTERS
MILLINERS BILLS
5
4
SOUPS
FISH
ENTRÉES
REMOVES
GAME
SWEETS
PLUMS
£ S D
6
7
8

HOW TO GET MARRIED.

1. *To Marry an Artist.*—Wear carrotty hair and faded brocade, and gush freely.
2. *To Marry a Government Clerk.*—Read the *Times*, yawn, and look as foolish as you conveniently can.
3. *To Marry a High Church Curate.*—Confess your sins and the fact of your having a snug little sum in the Three per Cents.
4. *To Marry an Ante-Teetotaller.*—Costume.
5. *To Marry Nobody.*—Dress violently, talk slang, and flirt heavily.
6. *To Marry a Temperance Leaguer.*—Costume, &c.
7. *To Marry a Lord Mayor or Alderman.*—Costume, drop your "H," and wink your "I."
8. *To Marry anybody you please.*—Have money.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE
How to get Married	Gordon Thomson	*Frontispiece.*
The Baron Bold of the Days of Old	T. Hood	11
A Pretty Kettle of Fish	R. L.	12
Lovers' Consolations	T.	15
Two Dinners	H.	16
Dîner à la Russe, Dîner à la Ruse	F. A. Fraser	17
A Styelish Story	George R. Sims	18
In the Brighton Express	Charles Williams	21
The Man who Hesitated—and was Lost	Harry Tuck	24
Lottie's Carp	W. Senior	26
Social Adulteration	J. F. Sullivan	32
The Flower of the Flock	Author of "Lilliput Levee"	34
A Photographic Courtship	L. G. Adey	35
An Alphabetical "First Night"	T. F. Dillon Croker	39
How I became a Highlander	H. Sandercock	40
A Forcible Remembrance	Joseph Manton	42
"Bilzvord Jistis"	Edward Capern	47
A Legend of Parson's Green	J. Moyr Smith	48
O. B. C. T.'s Sighs	O. B. C. T.	49
The Sabots of Mère Trinette	F. F. Broderip	50
A Painter's Vengeance	J. F. Sullivan	53
A Sketch for an Operetta	Matthew Walker	54
Pride Punished	T. Hood E. Grasset	55
The Students and the Slumberer	H. J. Moyr Smith	57
Autumn Primrose	Matthew Browne	59
The Zoo by Night	T. E. H. G. Ernest Griset	64
The Casting Vote	William Sawyer	67
Il Penseroso	J. Goldsmith	71
Long, long ago	Gordon Thomson	72
The Phantom Fishing-Boat	T. Hood	74
A Hungry Boy	Geo. Manville Fenn	75
A Pig's Tale	T. H. W. J. Wiegand	79
A Slight Mistake	Alfred R. Phillips	82
Saint or Sinner	Ignotus	85
Mysterious Disappearence of Tymkyns: Startling Discovery	Gordon Thomson	88
A Nautical Novelty	Dod Grile	90
The Classical Musicianer	G.	93
A Continuous Story	M. Labais	94
The Exquisite and the Entomologist	H. Tuck	96
A Life's Hatred	Henry Sampson	98
Songs of Trees	F. A. Fraser T. H.	102
Queen Sigrid the Haughty	E. G. Dalziel A. Shortfellow	103
Two Pictures from my Gallery of Girls	J. Ashby-Sterry	106
Concerning Pigs	J. A. O'Shea	106
A Row in the Butter Market	H.	110
Walnuts for Wisdom Teeth	T. H. Harry Tuck	111

MR. STREETER,

DIAMOND MERCHANT,
JEWELLER,
18 NEW BOND ST.,
LONDON.

GOLDSMITH,
WATCHMAKER,
BURLINGTON STEAM WORKS, W.,
SAVILE ROW,

CATALOGUE FREE FOR TWO STAMPS.

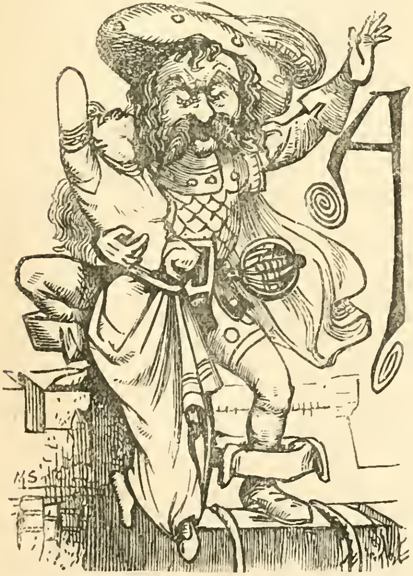
18 New Bond St., London.

The New Zodiac Jewellery. Registered.

TOM HOOD'S COMIC ANNUAL
TIMS
EDITOR
RTI ST
AUTHOR

THE BARON BOLD OF THE DAYS OF OLD.

A Story without any apparent Rhyme or Reason.



A LONG time ago I'd the honour to know
A baron bold of the days of old.
And he came to me, and he said, said he,
"What I'm going to declare perhaps you're aware—
That a baron bold of the days of old
In his high degree is supposed to be
The blackest black of a very black pack—
To take people's lives, run off with their wives,
Make forays and raids, and bolt with fair maids
To lift sheep and kine, and drink too much wine!"
And I said, said I, that I couldn't see why.
And he said, said he, "Now, cannot you see,
All writers say so—and all writers must know!"
So I said, said I, "H'm!" a safe-ish reply.
"Well, I am," on he ran, "a domestical man,
And I don't care for slaughter, or any one's daughter,
Much less for his wife, or his cows, or his life;
I prefer my small beer, for wine makes me queer.
Don't you shrink to review the things I've to do?"
So I said, said I, that I failed to espy
Any reason that made him drive such a trade.
And he said, said he, "As it is, it must be;
For if I should shirk my regular work
The writers would say, in a soul-searing way,
'Our nobility jogs pretty fast to the dogs!'
So what I must do, I have to go through—
Though I freely admit I don't like it a bit,

And would take tea at home much rather than roam
To murder and plunder. I would, sir, by thunder!"
Then I answered him, "Sir, did it never occur
To yourself, now, that you were, before you were due
By some centuries, hurled on this terrible world?
Why not wait a few years and be one of our peers,
Who give away tracts, and talk solid facts,
Social science, and such grave topics and touch
On wages and drainage, as pleases a plain age."
He replied with a curse, "Hang it! that would be worse;
I'd rather by far take things as they are—
Rather murder and rob, do any vile job,
Slit weasand, crack noddle, than deal in such twaddle!"
Said this baron bold of the days of old.

T. Hood.

A PRETTY KETTLE OF FISH.

POOR old Jack! he's gone now, but he was a good fellow. And didn't he love a joke—a harmless joke, mind you! Nothing mischievous—only a bit of practical fun that the victim would laugh at, too, unless his bump of self-esteem was unnaturally thin-skinned. I ought to know, for I was the victim sometimes, and so were two or three others I could name, who were, like me, terribly cut-up when they learnt that never again would they be made subject to his pranks.

It was Jack who proposed the little excursion whose history I am about to relate to you. He came to me at my office in the City one day, and suggested a day's fishing in the Docks. I knew something about some of the Docks, and I knew something of Jack, I need hardly say; so I only laid my pen knowingly on the side of my nose, and winked.

"You didn't catch him, though!" said Jack, with an air of interest.

"Catch what?" said I, taken off my guard.

"That fly!" replied Jack, gravely.

"No flies!" was my answer.

"Ah! when I saw you put your pen to your proboscis, I thought it was a fly tickling you," he said, without the shadow of a smile.

"If there was a fly," said I, "it was one that *you* threw, and I didn't rise at it." For we were fishermen, and I knew he would understand me. Jack took up the inkstand and smelt it, put it down, and murmured half to himself, "No! real ink—not whisky!"

"Look here, Jack," I observed, "this is mail day, and I'm busy. What are you driving at?"

"What are *you* driving at? I ask you to come and have a day's fishing, and you conduct yourself like a lunatic in charge of a steel pen, and not quite sure what to do with it."

"A day's fishing in the Docks!" I roared out in a burst of laughter. "Have you taken a contract for verdigris, or dead bodies, or what?"

"This," observed Jack in a confidential manner to the date-indicator on the mantelpiece—"this shows the narrowing effect of commerce on the human mind! Because Dick's business lies among ships that import rum, molasses, cockroaches, and other—other inflammables, he can't think of any Docks except those where his craft—the only craft he possesses, the simple child—lie, poisoning the water, until they can find some one silly enough to send a return cargo to the barbarians—should say Barbadoes—where the natives exist on the sugar, and are kept alive by the cane!—Richard, did you ever hear of timber? And if so, did you ever hear of it in connection with Docks on the other side of the water?"

I admitted I had heard of the Docks he alluded to.

"Then perhaps you are not aware that there is very good fishing there—fifteen-pound bream!

"Well!" he added, seeing my pen hovering in the neighbourhood of the nasal cartilage again, "say ten! And if ten, why not fifteen?"

Having got so far, we settled down to talk the question over seriously, and to arrange the party. We were to be four in number, and Jack and I supplied half. Jem Bridges was unanimously elected number three, but we hesitated about the fourth, possibly because it was the last vacancy, and that gave it undue importance. There was a choice of friends, but that only complicated the matter.

"Let's ask Doddington!" said Jack suddenly. I was astonished a little, for Doddington was not, as far as I could see, as eligible as half a dozen other fellows I was thinking of. But somehow one had a way of acquiescing in Jack's opinions, so I only asked feebly "why?"

Dick snatched up a paper-knife, and extending it towards me, said in a tragical voice, "Swear on my sword that you will not divulge!" I believe I swore, but it was not in proper tragedy form, I fear, for I saw the clock-hands hastening onward, and thought of the mail.

"Seriously, then, Dick!" said Jack, "we three shall get on all right, but Doddy will be a convenient party if the fish don't bite and it begins to get slow. Twig? All right! I'll see to getting Jem and Doddy, and I'll arrange for a quiet little snack at a handy tavern, which shall be enough even without the fish we shall catch."

Jack departed; I finished my letter; time flew; and, in due course, the appointed day arrived.

Doddy was first at the rendezvous. Trust Doddy for that! He was an exemplary——but there! any monumental sculptor can supply you, out of his epitaph commonplace-book, a list of all the virtues Doddy possessed, as a father, husband, friend, &c.; but Doddy had one special idol, and that idol was Doddy! He was first, in order to secure what he thought the best post—a mooring-post, by-the-way—on which he could sit while he cast his float upon the waters (to return to him with many bream, as he hoped), where there was a space less encumbered with timber than any other pitch. He had put his rod there as a sort of tacit proof of occupation. I could see Jack smile when he observed our friend's characteristic bit of prudence. But he said nothing, and in a short time we had put our rods together, and were presently watching our floats, as they pricked up almost motionless on the scarcely-rippled surface of the water.

With the patience of true Waltonians—assisted, it is true, by the soothing influence of tobacco—we sat watching our quills, while hour after hour chimed from the neighbouring steeples with such variations of punctuality as pleased their respective clocks.

Jack had planted himself exactly opposite to Doddy, and having filled his pocket with pebbles from a ballast-waggon at the station, amused himself by throwing a stone now and then in the neighbourhood of Doddy's float, whenever that worthy's eyes happened to stray from it. This was partly to frighten away the fish and partly to make Doddy think that they were feeding close by his pitch.

"That must have been a fish leaping!" shouted Doddy after one loud splash. "Did you see him, Jack?"

"Yes!" said Jack "he was a proper big 'un!" It was true,—with the mental reservation that "a big 'un" is equally applicable to a stone and a fish.

All of a sudden, Jem Bridges was seen to be in an excited state. He had hooked a fish! Of course we all forgot our own rods in the excitement, and might have caught a shark apiece without noticing it. In due time the catch was landed—and a good catch it was, a seven-pound bream. Loud were our congratulations, and hearty the cheer we indulged in, when Jem popped him into the basket.

"I think," said Doddy presently, "I shall come and fish near you, Jem!" And without scruple he shifted his quarters, invading Jem's swim so effectually that Jem with a grimace drew out his line at last, and took up a pitch nearer Jack. As they were not far distant now, Jack went and examined

Jem's fish, and then returned to his own post. A minute or so afterwards he was gazing very intently into space over Doddy's head.

"Looks like a sea-gull!" he shouted. "Doddy! what's that bird just behind you?"

Doddy turned to look.

"I don't see him," said he.

"Gone behind that warehouse," said Jack. "I think it was"—

But here he began to be seized in the same way that Jem had been, and presently brought to shore another big bream, quite half a pound heavier than Jem's he assured, us. We were all delighted, except Doddy, who began to fidget again.

"Jack," he said at last, "any room there beyond you? I don't think there are any fish about here."

"All right!" replied Jack. "You take my place, and I'll go over to your old pitch. I saw them jumping there, and it's rum if I don't get one."

So Doddy took Jack's place, and Jack went round to the pitch exactly opposite. As Jack passed me, he adroitly changed baskets.

"Look here, Dick! it's Jem's fish I have just caught. You put him quietly on your hook, and while I take off Doddy's attention, drop him in and catch him. Doddy will be round here in the twinkling of a bedpost, and you can return the fish to Jem, who will hook him again. It's odd if we don't have a fine catch!"

I saw it in a minute; so when Jack had left me, I made an excuse to light my pipe, and quietly fixed the hook in the bream's jaws. Meantime, Jack took the opportunity while Doddy's eye was wandering to throw a big stone into the Dock.

"Hi! you young scamp!" he shouted, shaking his fist at nobody behind Doddy's back. "What do you mean by shying stones? Look out, Doddy! he's going to heave again!"

Doddy instinctively turned to see the aggressor, and of course saw no one.

"There's no boy there," he shouted to Jack.

"Young scamp bolted when I hollaed," answered Jack.

In the meantime I had quietly dropped the fish into the water, and the next instant was in all the agonies of catching him.

As Jack had predicted, Doddy soon found an excuse for ousting me, and as I passed Jem, I managed to hand him the fish.

It is needless to explain the devices by which Doddy's attention was distracted. We caught that same fish twice apiece, and by that time were beginning to get near the hour appointed for dinner. Of course we all commiserated with Doddy on his want of success, until he was half mad with disappointment and envy.

About an hour before dinner-time I was a little surprised to hear Jack suggest that we should pull out, pack up, and go to the inn. But Jack knew best! He was right in his estimate of human nature. It took at least an hour to persuade Doddy to relinquish his rod. He pleaded for half an hour—then another quarter—then ten minutes—then five more; and he exceeded each concession, so that we were really late before we set out for dinner. Jack had packed up some time before Doddy was ready, and had disappeared for awhile with his basket. On his return, and while Doddy was reluctantly taking his rod to pieces, he went through the farce of collecting all the fish in one basket.

When he had duly performed this important ceremony, he let us all feel what a heavy basket we had made among us. It *was* heavy, too!

Doddy took it in hand ruefully—opened the lid and peeped in, and there saw the topmost fish calmly reclining on the bed of grass which Jack had considerately gathered to pack our catch in. Doddy did not seem disposed to deliver up possession. But Jack was prepared for that.

"Look here, Doddy!" said he, "I've told the landlord to be ready to cook what we bring; I'm sorry you've had such bad luck, but I'll tell you what we'll do — I'm sure Jem and Dick won't mind, because they can spare a little glory out of such a catch: you shall carry the fish, and so you are sure to be supposed to have caught some of it at least, and you won't be asked any questions, and therefore won't be called upon to tell any fibs. What do you say?"

Doddy was only too delighted. He stuck to the basket, and we took the road to the inn. It was a hot day, and Doddy wasn't over-thin, and Jack gave the pace at a pretty quick step; so that, I think, by the time we had finished our walk, Doddy had begun to tire of "the burden of the honour" we had bestowed upon him.

We entered the parlour, and were duly welcomed by the landlord, to whom Jack was well known.

"Good sport, gentlemen, I hope?" said he.

"Splendid!" broke in Doddy, before we could say a word. "Never had such sport in my life—never!"

"Oh, we've had sport enough!" said Jack, with a significant grin, as he lifted the fish out, and laying him on the table, said to the landlord, "That's a specimen of the take. Big 'un, isn't he?—Turn out the rest, Doddy."

Doddy did not wait to lift the others out. He eagerly tilted the basket and emptied the contents on the table. The contents were two half bricks, a large flint, two stones (discharged ballast), and a dozen or so of oyster-shells.

It would have done you good to see Doddy's face, and to hear our roar of laughter!

An explanation followed, of course, which at first made Doddy very savage; but presently he got a little pacified by the reflection that, after all, Jack and I had not been more successful than he. By the time dinner was over he had recovered his temper, and we were all as jolly as possible.

I haven't seen Doddy for a long time, and, as I said, poor Jack is gone! But I often fall in with Jem, and I have only to allude to the Timber Dock and our catch of bream to make him laugh as heartily as he dare on this side of apoplexy. For Jem and I are both older than we were, but it makes us lads again when we think of that pretty kettle of fish.

R. L.

LOVERS' CONSOLATIONS.

GREY Time, you deceiver, you wandered beside us;
We heard not your footstep: 'twas hushed in the grass
Where we gathered the flow'rs — thought no ills could betide us,
And saw not the ebb of the sands in your glass!

Came clouds, and came showers, to darken the flowers;
We only crept closer for mutual cheer,
And simply felt grateful for trials, whose powers
But made each to each still more near and more dear!

Years flew—I admit we got weary of stooping
For flow'rs, when rheumatics affected our backs;
When you've picked them, besides, there's arranging and grouping,
And that, after all, is a sort of a tax.

Besides, there's the chance of a thorn or a prickle,
To fester a finger or poison a hand;
And now when I'm bald how a garland would tickle!
And Julia's false front has a neat velvet band.

T.

TWO DINNERS.

A LA RUSSE.

I LIKE your notion much, mine host,
An oyster first, or else, for relish,
Just one square inch of crisp dry toast
Olive or caviare embellish.
Your soup is turtle—not the mock—
The true original and real.
That calf's-head broth is apt to shock
Your thorough epicure's ideal.

Red mullet, salmon—there's a choice:
In fish a choice is proper—very.
In wine, too, you allow a voice:
Hock, or a glass of golden sherry.
Entrées—a lobster patty, now,
I always think, is *ben trovato;*
And one small cutlet, I allow,
Provided it has sauce Tomato.

A joint, of course, or maybe two,
At top and bottom of the table:
A dinner, from the English view,
Must rest on a foundation stable.
A brace of birds—as you prefer,
Or grouse, or woodcock; or a pheasant;
A host can never greatly err
In what's in season just at present.

A choice of sweets, but not too much:
They are what framing is to pictures;
They're things I very seldom touch;
But I'll exempt them from all strictures.
Dessert! A grape or two can't cloy;
A peach, perhaps; but, to *my* thinking,
Dessert's a thing wherewith to toy,
While chatting o'er the wine you're drinking.

And, finally, I think a whiff—
Half a Cabana's full employment;
But easily dispensed with, if
It mars another guest's enjoyment.
There you've my programme. I can say—
The well-known sentiment to borrow—
"The gods be praised, I've dined to-day,
Let come whatever comes to-morrow!"

À LA RUSE.

IT'S raining—or hailing—or snowing,
As the drops fall it's hard to say which they are:
It truly is scarcely worth knowing
To people, provided that rich they are!
But to those who are not in that flow'ry way,
It's important to know while they're pelting them
If they take their drops neat in a show'ry way,
Or must waste their caloric in melting them.

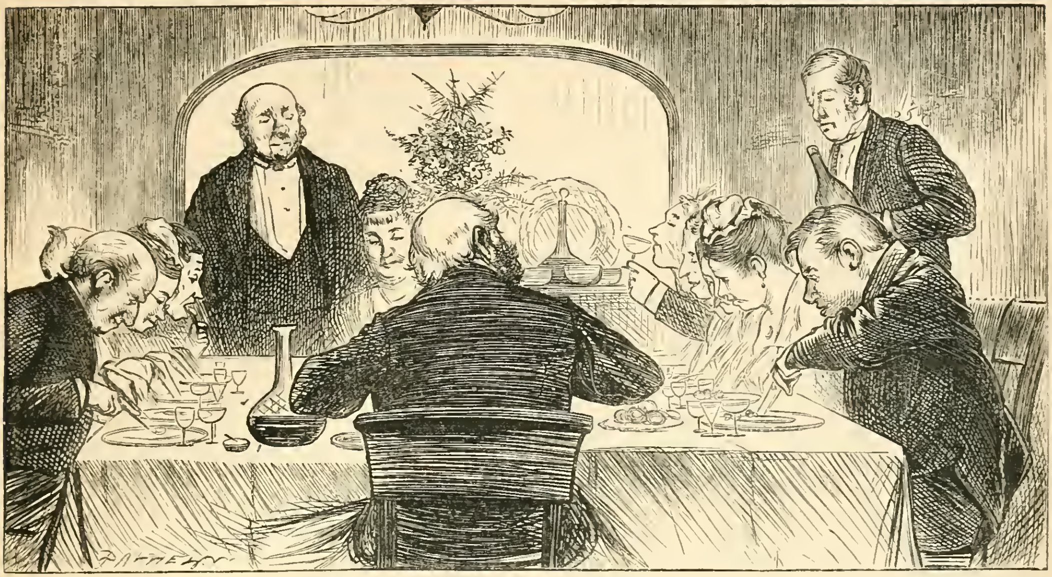
Wind, roaring without, sounds quite pleasant,
Warms the wine, as you're taking a pull of it:
But outside, to excess it is present,
When already you're rather too full of it.
And your meat—how you grumble at carving,
And growl at the terrible price of it:
There are people, you know, who are starving,
Would cut you it up—for a slice of it!

Yes! they starve—out of mere contrariety,
Yet there is, it strikes me, a disparity
'Twixt their starving—and our grand Society
For the Organisation of Charity.
It's needful, you say, more's the pity,
The poor have such cheating and lies in them;
But meanwhile in the streets of our city
Why, there's some one just falls down and dies in them.

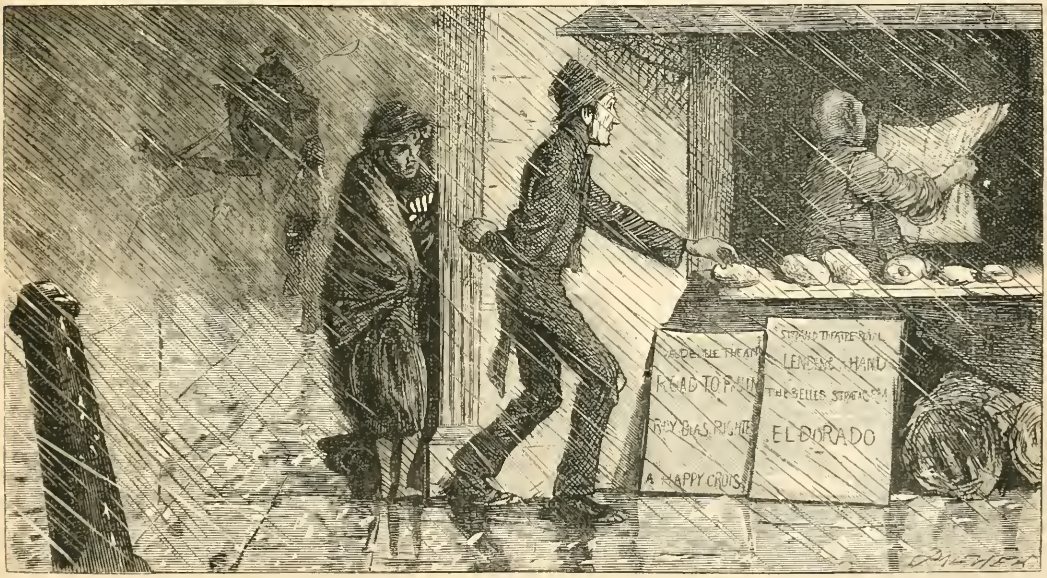
This or That you have given your guinea,
'T is of alms an experienced measurer:—
You're assisting to keep, you poor ninny,
A couple of clerks and a treasurer,
And you give, because giving is easy,
On your path to the next world to lighten you;
You're but making the roadway more greasy
To——there, I'm not anxious to frighten you!

I can't hope your conscience to waken-up,
Only don't in your Pharisee snobbery—
When a poor starving beggar is taken-up
For stealing a loaf—call it robbery.
You pay—yes, of course—for your dinner,
As for theft, you are certainly pure of it.
Is the money you spend, brother sinner,
All honestly gained? Are you sure of it?

TWO DINNERS.



DINER À LA RUSSE.


VAUDEVILLE THEATRE
ROAD TO RUIN
RUY BLAS RIGHTED
A HAPPY CROIS
STRAND THEATRE ROYAL
LENDING HAND
THE BELLES STRATAGEM
EL DORADO

DINER À LA RÛSE.

A STYELISH STORY.

My story is a sad one, and yet it may fail to gain your sympathy. In your heartlessness, it is possible the recital of my woes may excite your hilarity. For this I am prepared.

All my life my sufferings have been the cause of unutterable anguish of body and mind to myself: to my friends and fellow-creatures, the subject of a jest. The aches, pains, and eruptions to which my unfortunate system is liable, together make up a sum of discomfort which is becoming intolerable; and never do I timidly venture to mention my troubles in society, without bringing upon my unhappy and often-aching head an avalanche of unmerciful badinage.

I am a martyr to rheumatism, and Providence has blessed me with a liver which is "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever" to my medical adviser. When I knew that worthy man first, he was a chemist's assistant. I went to him with some trifling complaint, liked him, and soon called upon him with another: I became his constant visitor. The range of my afflictions was so immense, that through me he soon obtained an insight into most of the ills that beset our poor humanity. Skill followed insight; practice trod closely on the heels of skill. To-day he is a popular doctor, and charges me four times his original fee.

There are men, calling themselves my friends, who have been mean enough to assert that half of my diseases owe their existence to my weekly perusal of that excellent journal, the "Lancet." I have always repelled the accusation with scorn. So far from my ailments existing only in my imagination, they too often, alas! give outward and visible signs of their presence. I have a brave indomitable spirit, and for years I have borne my pains with heroism, and worn an outward smile while the most horrible tortures have been inwardly transacting themselves; but I pine for sympathy. Could I but gain the smallest scrap of pity for my wretched lot, I should be happy in spite of twinge, ache, and throb. Alas! my cheeks are roseate with the bloom of youth, my proportions are stout, my carriage erect: even my appearance mocks me.

Without a murmur hitherto I have borne the callous and unfeeling jokes of my friends and acquaintances. I will bear them no longer.

I will relate an incident of my life that will once and for ever silence the idiots who consider my tribulations as trifles—the heartless monsters to whom my periodical inflictions are a source of merriment. When these lines shall fall beneath their eyes, may the tears of sorrow which shall drop upon the page cleanse their souls from the iniquity of their injustice towards the most miserable of men.

Like all delicate persons, I am excessively sensitive. A pimple—a little pimple—would be, perhaps, to ordinary men a trifling inconvenience. To me it is not only an ever-present disfigurement—it is a bitter memory—a sharp biting reminder of my sad life's blackest sorrow.

Hear my story, and judge me by it.

In the summer of 1870 I was staying at a friend's house in the country. My health had been delicate, and I gladly availed myself of his offer that I should make my home with him during the summer months. My host was Brown by name, and a gentleman farmer by profession. To his many good qualities he added that of being the father of two lovely daughters, both of a marriageable age. With the younger, Clementina, I soon fell madly in love. How shall I describe the charms of her whose features are for ever photographed upon my heart? The ink recedes from my pen, appalled at the task I would set it. Bring back to your memory the most beautiful creature you ever beheld: imagine one ten times more lovely, and you have Clementina Brown—my Clementina—she whom I pictured in my dreams the gentle partner of my future life. My days beneath her father's roof passed in calm unruffled peace. Through the green lanes at times we walked together, she talking and I listening. I rarely interrupted her: I drank in the sweet music of her voice; my whole soul revelled in the soft glory of her presence. Bah! what is this to you! I am a poet; you may not be, and you will not appreciate my feelings. I have set myself a task: let me hasten to the bitter end.

The days went on, and my stay was drawing to a close. Madly as I loved Clementina, I had never told her so—in words. My every look, my every action, spoke the secret of my heart; but my tongue had never uttered it. I think she liked me—I had almost written *loved*—yes, I will write it, "loved!" Why should I rob myself now of the idea which has been my only solace through four weary years?

One day we had been together for a longer ramble than usual. My darling was tired, and leaned upon my arm. I spoke of my approaching departure. I felt her arm tremble. I looked eagerly into her face. The colour had receded from her cheeks. Looking up, she caught my earnest gaze, and a vivid blush spread itself over her face and rushed downward to her neck.

"Let us walk quickly; we shall be late for dinner."

That was all she said.

That night old Brown and I sat late over our evening pipes. Just as he was rising to ring for his candle and retire, the words that had been on my lips for hours fell from them:

"Brown, old friend, I have something to say to you."

"Well, lad?"

"I—I love Clementina."

"I 've seen it long ago."

"And you give your consent?"

"To what?"

"To our marriage."

"Steady, my lad, steady! What does she say?"

"I—that is—to tell you the truth, I haven't asked her."

"Ask her, my boy, to-morrow; and if she says yes I 'll——"

"Say 'yes,' too?"

"I 'll think about it."

"God bless you, sir! Good night!"

"Good night."

That night I lay awake and dreamed—dreamed of a soft white hand clasped close in mine—dreamed of a village church, of great white clouds of muslin and lace, of fragrant clusters of roses and orange-blossom, and everywhere a fair girlish face. I stretched my arms towards the vision, and whispered "Clementina!" I fell asleep with that name upon my lips—Clementina.

When I awoke the sun was glaring in through the window. I opened my eyes, and suddenly a sharp pain seemed to shoot across the right lid. I raised my hand and touched it: the touch pained me. I sprang from the bed, and rushed across the room to the mirror. My right eyelid was swollen and red—my eye was partially closed. I had a stye!

* * * * * *

I have previously stated that I am a man painfully sensitive to the slightest personal disfigurement. To those who are constituted like myself, the horror of my situation will be instantly apparent. To present myself before Clementina in my present condition was impossible. How could any woman give the first kiss of love to a man whose right eye was closed by an enormous stye?

Again and again I gazed in the mirror, and each time the face reflected therein seemed more ridiculous. No! never would I be associated in her mind with the pitiful, squinting object that I felt certain I must appear. Anything rather than that.

Cursing my cruel fate, I hurriedly finished my toilet. Flight, immediate and secret, was the only plan that presented itself to my tortured mind. I packed my portmanteau, and then looked cautiously out of the window.

No one was about. Taking my portmanteau in my hand, I slipped noiselessly down the stairs, undid the front door, and rushed rapidly across the fields to the railway station. A beautiful Alderney cow, with which Brown intended to take the first prize at the next Cattle Show, followed me through the farm gate. I waved the animal back, but still it followed me. I had no time to turn back—the London express was in sight. Panting and puffing, I gained the station just as the train came to a standstill. At nine o'clock I was in town.

* * * * * *

My eye grew gradually worse. In spite of warm applications, rubbings with wedding-rings, and medical advice, the swelling obstinately refused to decrease. I wrote a long rambling letter to Brown, endeavouring to explain my sudden flight. The real cause I dared not tell him: to me it was painful—to him it would have appeared ridiculous.

Two days afterwards I received his answer. It ran thus:

"I have to acknowledge receipt of yours dated the 4th inst. I am utterly at a loss to imagine what motive can have induced you to quit my house in so sudden and, I must say, so rude a manner. Your letter throws no light upon the subject. After the secret you had confided to me the night before your departure, I cannot but imagine you had a sudden revulsion of feeling, and *ran away* to avoid meeting my daughter. Until I receive a proper explanation of your extraordinary conduct, I shall cease to consider you my friend, and refuse to recognize you as an acquaintance. You have killed my"——

I lifted my eyes from the page. I knew what was coming. My sudden flight had broken Clementina's heart! She was dangerously ill. Courage! let me read on:

"You have killed my *cow*."—Thank heaven!—"You left the great gate open, and the poor thing strayed on to the railway, and was killed. You have lost me the first prize, and *I will never forgive you!*"

Poor Brown! Poor Clementina! Poor cow! All of this misery, and wretchedness, and misfortune, and death was the result of the painful pimple that throbbed, and shot, and ached, and drove me nearly mad.

A fortnight of mingled pain, despair, and rage passed by, and the cause of my misfortunes began to get better. Ten days, and my face had resumed its pristine appearance. I determined at once to return to Brown, explain my conduct, console him for the loss of his cow, and propose to his daughter. My portmanteau was packed and a hansom stood at the door, when a telegram was placed in my hands. My father was dangerously ill at Portsmouth. I must go to him at once.

* * * * * *

It was two months before my father's health allowed me to leave his bed-side. The moment he was out of danger I returned to town. All this time the face of my Clementina had been present in my dreams, her name for ever upon my lips. At last I was free to behold her again, to tell her how madly, how devotedly I loved her.

The first night of my return I telegraphed Brown that I would be with him on the morrow. I retired early to rest, and my thoughts flew rapidly to the sweet country Eden where dwelt my Eve—my Clementina. She loved me: I was sure of that. I would explain everything, buy Brown another cow, get his consent, and all would be well.

Suddenly I woke with a start from the half-doze into which I had fallen. No! Yes! Even at this distance of time I can scarcely write with composure the history of that awful moment. My right eye was smarting! I sprang from the bed, and hurriedly struck a light. I rushed wildly across the room to the dressing-glass. One glance was sufficient. I gave a wild howl of despair and staggered backwards to the bed. THE STYE HAD COME AGAIN!

* * * * * *

While yet beneath warm fomentations that evil eye of mine was being reduced, came a letter from Brown, which closed for ever one page of my sad life's history. Clementina had accepted a young clergyman who did duty in the neighbourhood, and was lost to me for ever.

Brown never forgave the murderer of his cow. I lost my friend; I lost her who should have been my wife; I lost health, happiness, home, all that would have made life sweet to me. But I have never lost that stye. Now and again, sometimes twice, sometimes thrice a year, it comes to remind me of the past. Only a "little worry"! only a little stye! Nothing to make a fuss about, is it, my great, strong, thick-skinned, and sound friends? You laugh when I groan beneath my paltry afflictions. But that which excites your mirth brings to me a painful memory. Before me rises the image of the first, last woman that I ever loved—the blue-eyed angel lost to me for ever, my Clementina Brown.

George R. Sims.

IN THE BRIGHTON EXPRESS.

"YES, sir, you may smile, sir, but I pride myself that I am the most regular and frequent traveller in England, Ireland, or Scotland. I travel four times every day of my life, except Sundays, and twice then, from London or Croydon to Brighton, and from Brighton to Croydon or London. It does not cost much—not more than two good clubs. The annual ticket is only thirty pounds. It costs about fivepence-halfpenny for two journeys, and I have a continual change of society: business men morning and evening, young swells in the middle of the day and at night. I am as well known on the line as Mr. Knight himself. The porters all know me, and tell one another that I am mad; the regular passengers know me, and think that I am one of the company's travelling detectives—ha! ha! I'm an idle man, sir, and if I choose to amuse myself in this way, what business is it of anybody's? It puts thirty pounds a year into the pockets of the shareholders, and it does not take a penny out of them—yet!—for they run no special train for me, don't even put on another carriage because I'm travelling. So they can't complain—can they?"

And my fellow-traveller quite glared at me, as if he fancied I were about to contradict him. But I did nothing of the kind; indeed, we were by this time running into the Brighton Station, and I was by no means sorry to get out of the compartment which had contained for an hour and a quarter myself and one whom I could not but consider as an escaped lunatic.

It was my fortune that winter to have on my hands at Brighton an invalid relative, so that I ran up and down four or five times a week, and a strange fate threw me almost daily into the company of the perpetual passenger, whom I found a man of immense reading, of great attainments, of perfectly sound judgment on all the great questions of the day—in a word, mad only on the question of railway travelling.

It was Christmas Eve, and we were again occupants of the same compartment. A gust of wind had blown out the lamp almost as soon as we moved out of London Bridge Terminus. There was nothing for it but either to sleep or to talk; and sleep is not possible in a railway carriage if a fellow-passenger insists on talking.

"I'll tell you," he said, "the real reason why I travel continually on this line, until people think of me as a sort of railway Flying Dutchman: I want to be present at a big railway collision or fearful accident of some sort. There has not been one on this line for years; but that is all the more reason why there must be one soon: the law of averages makes that quite certain. The Board of Trade Returns show that there must in the nature of things be so many accidents every year. Sometimes they are on one railway, sometimes on another. The turn of the Brighton line must come soon, and I should not like to be absent. A strange taste, you think?"

I intimated that there did appear to be something peculiar in the fancy.

"Yes," he proceeded, "most people would think so. My wife thinks so; my daughter thinks so; I think so myself. But the singular thing is that the more I try to get into railway accidents, the more remote they seem to be. Do you know," he went on, "that I think this company should give me an annual ticket free? I am a regular insurance against accidents for them. If I stopped travelling for one day I do believe a big accident would happen that day just to spite me. Fortune favours the persistent, they say, but on this point my reward has yet to come. It is the one passion of my life to see, at whatever risk, a big railway accident; and it is the one thing that Fate denies me. I have seen a great many horrible things; and, by-the-way, it was, I think, just this day twenty years that I was lucky enough to have a horrible sight all to myself. Shall I tell you the story?"

"By all means," I replied, glad to change the subject from railway accidents, which are not the pleasantest matters of conversation in an express train flying through the darkness at about forty-five miles an hour.

"Well, you must know that I was very fond of travelling in my youth—I don't mean this sort of safe, too safe, journeying—but real travelling. By the time I was six and twenty, there was nothing in Europe worth seeing that I hadn't seen, and travelling then was not what travelling is now, when you are whisked from one end of Europe to the other in a night and a morning. There were railways here and there, of course; but there was something like pleasure in the entire uncertainty, when you started on a journey, whether you would get to your destination at the time you supposed or not. However, I got tired of Europe, and then I did America, North and South.

"It was after a trip on the Amazon that I found myself at Parà, whence communication with England was then infrequent and delightfully uncertain. There was but one vessel in port bound for Britain. She was a barque of some seven hundred tons, of American build, but sailing under the red flag of England; and she had brought out a lot of calicoes on speculation, and had done very well with them. The skipper did not want to go home light; and, as Indian corn, or maize, was very cheap just then and there, he determined to take a cargo home, and he half filled up his vessel with this grain. The English Consul then thought he might as well try to make a little money in the same way—(they were not so strict at 'F.O.' about commerce then as they are now)—and he put as much more on board on his own account, filling the good ship 'Arabella' up to the hatches. Everything promised a profit of fifty or sixty per cent. at least on the transaction, and the 'Arabella' was to sail at once. So I took my passage in her, and all went on well until we were about half-way across the Atlantic—never mind the latitude and longitude, but we were *en pleine mer*—with no land within a thousand miles or so, when the delightful weather broke, and a tornado came on, which lasted for three days. The ship laboured heavily, and strained her upper timbers very much; but still there was no water in the pumps, and the captain was quite confident that all was going on well.

"On the fourth day it fell a dead calm, and there was nothing to keep the ship steady in the fearful sea. She rolled about, her yard-arms at each roll dipping two or three feet into the waves, and a great green sea dashing over us every now and then. It was at this juncture that an alarm of fire was given. Some of the corn in the hold had heated, and was flaming! The skipper had the forehatch uncovered, and, as he expected, one of the next waves that dashed inboard effectually put out the fire, damaging but slightly, as we thought at the time, a small quantity only of the corn.

"Three or four days more passed, with a dead calm during the day and a very slight breeze at night. We were not making twenty knots a day, and the ocean was as smooth as the sea at Brighton when the wind is off the shore. The crew were all below; the captain was in his cabin asleep; the mate had gone to his bunk to brush his clothes; even the man in charge of the wheel had lashed the rudder amidships, and gone to attend to something else than his duty. I was alone on deck, lying in the long-boat, when——

"Why, he were are at Brighton, and safe again! Isn't it too bad? Come round to my house in an hour, and I'll finish the story, if you care about it. As this is Christmas Eve, I think I will not do another journey to-day, and you may be sure you'll hear of a terrible collision in the morning. 'T was ever thus; but if you really are interested in the story, I'll give up my chance of the accident—there now!"

* * * * * * * *

"Let me see," he said, sitting in his comfortable arm-chair. "Let me see, I was in the long-boat, I think. All at once I felt an earthquake and a report as of a battery of great guns—the 'Arabella' sank under me in pieces. I was in the long-boat, floating on the unrippled ocean among a pile of wreckage and maize, that lay scattered many a rood. Neither captain nor crew were ever seen again, even for a moment; and after knocking about the calm ocean for two days, I was picked up by an American ship and landed safe, but penniless, in Boston. That was something like an adventure—wasn't it? And it took place just this Christmas Eve twenty years. Ah! we don't have such adventures now-a-days; at least, I don't—more's the pity."

"But," said I, "how do you account for the ship breaking up so suddenly?"

"Don't you see?" he replied: "that green sea which put out the fire in the hold made the maize swell, and when it had swollen to a certain point it filled all the hold with a compact mass. As soon as it passed that point it burst all the timbers of the ship asunder with an irresistible force. It would have burst her even if she had been a heavy iron boiler."

"No doubt," said I; "this is one of the most astonishing things I ever heard of."

"So I thought," he added; "when I dreamt it last night after eating a mince pie."

"Dreamt it?" I exclaimed; "why, I took it all for fact."

"I thought you would," he said, with a chuckle. "I made sure of it. Why, I was never out of England."

"Then all that about your early travelling and so on was also a dream?"

"Yes," he laughed, "or a lie."

"And I suppose this fancy of yours for travelling is all a mistake too?"

His face darkened as he said earnestly and with a loud voice, "Mistake? Have I then not made you understand me yet? People say I am mad. I am. I want to kill myself. I read in the papers that the surest way to kill myself is to travel on a railway. Some day I shall be killed, and then my family will sue the company, and will recover all the cost of my season tickets and ten times more. Meanwhile I have the pleasure of making myself a wonder to people on the line, and of studying such characters as you."

"Complimentary!" said I.

"Ah," he said, "make your miserable life happy!—Have a cigar? No? Then let us stroll down to the Aquarium, and see your relatives."

"My relatives!" I demanded.

"Yes," said he, "your relatives—the gobies and the flat-fish!"

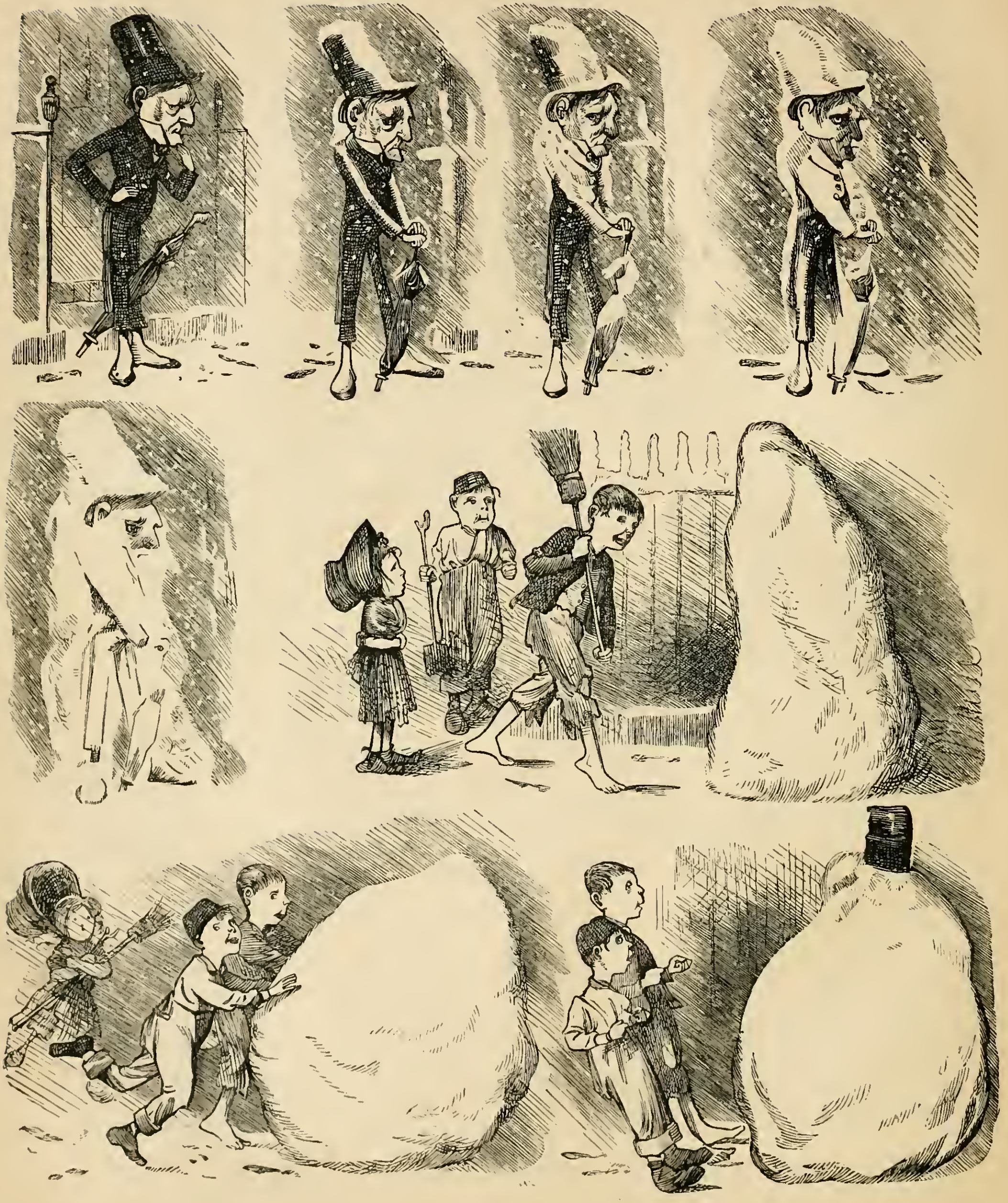
* * * * * * * *

I saw him yesterday.

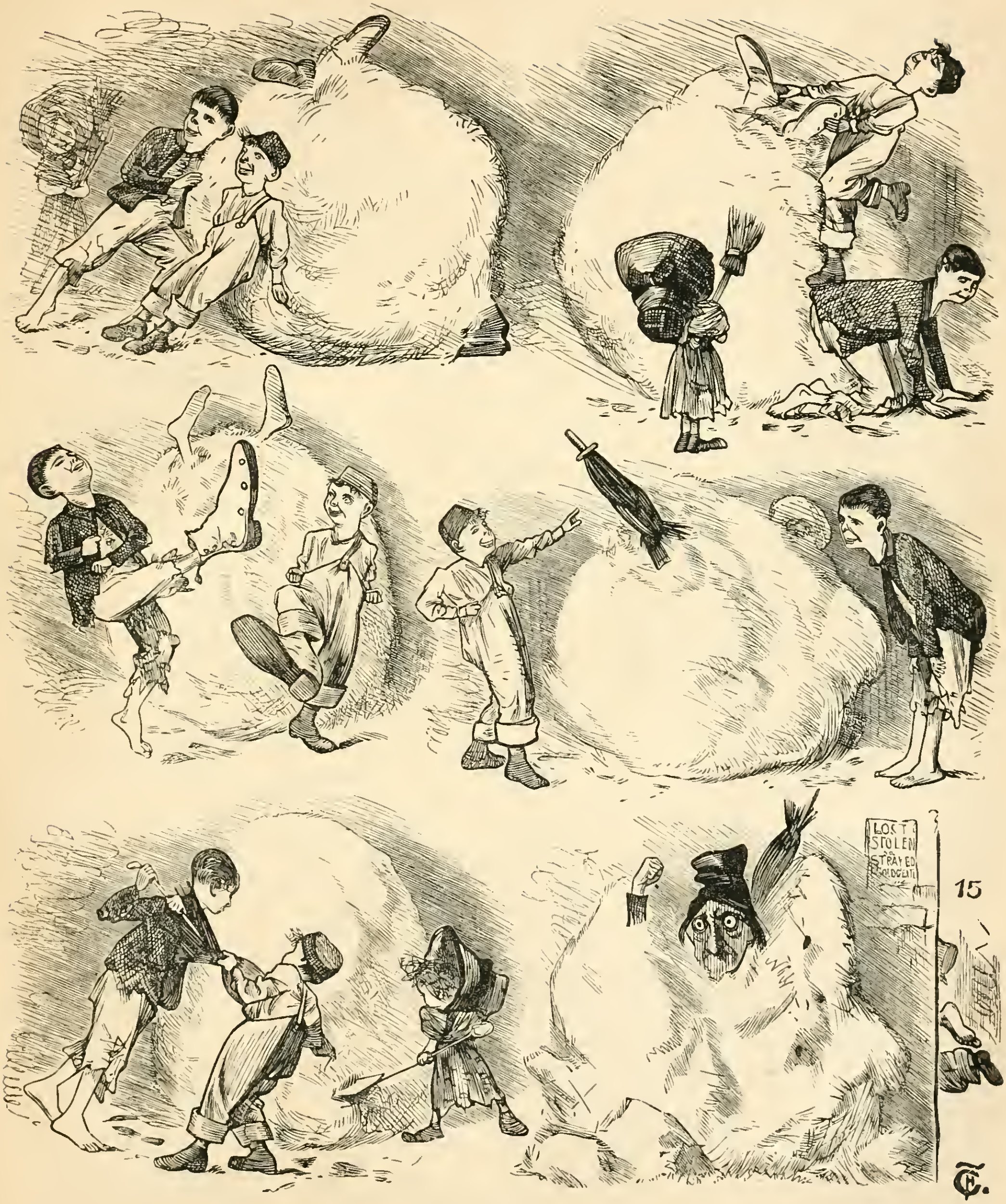
"I'm not killed yet," he said, quite cheerily, "but I don't intend to give up. According to all mathematical estimates, I must be killed in the next four months; so I have only renewed my season ticket for six months instead of a year. It is right to be economical. Bye, bye!"

Charles Williams.

THE MAN WHO HESITATED



—AND WAS LOST


LOST
STOLEN
&
STRAYED
15
TC

LOTTIE'S CARP.

VINCENT GODFREY at one time thought his love for Lottie Fairchild about the most undying thing that could be said or sung. I should not make him the subject of this story were it not that he went to India, and now lies, beyond the reach of Comic Annuals, under the shade of a mango-tree, not far from the pretty station of Durbharcomlee.

Vincent Godfrey, Cyril Fairchild, and myself were of the same mess in Hall, and no man at that period entered, or before, or since to my knowledge, ate his way to the Bar with greater regularity and voracity than did the poor but honest Vincent Godfrey, student-at-law, of the Inner Temple, Esq. The sixth son of a west country curate with the usual pitiable stipend and traditional enormous family, Vincent Godfrey could boast of most things but money; hence, when Fairchild, the son of a wealthy cotton-spinner, invited him down to Barlow's Gate for a holiday, promising him saddle-horses and fun *galore*, he did not require a second asking—stood not on the order of his going, but went.

Perhaps Cyril would not have been so free with his invitation had he been aware precisely how things were going on at Barlow's Gate. The cotton famine had just begun to grip Lancashire in its terrible throttle, and the mills were everywhere either closing or running at half-time.

Barlow's Gate was not exactly the place you would choose for a holiday in the hot months, when the whole duty of man is to lie under trees and think of nothing. The house inhabited by the Fairchilds was luxuriously appointed, and there were some useful horses in the stable. But the look-out was the reverse of romantic. There were forests to be seen, but they were of tall chimneys; there were hills and valleys also, but the hills were mounds of coal or mine refuse, and the valleys were sacred to inky canals. To a fastidious man, used to breezy moorlands and fragrant meads, it was something that the normal fall of smoke did not hang over the land; but as the clear air at this time was evidence of present distress and an ominous future, the gain was not absolute. There being no other visitors in the house, the young men had that neat problem before them, which others have experienced not a little difficulty in solving—the problem known as "killing time." Now it will be seen how important a personage in the matter was Lottie, only daughter of Adam Fairchild, the rich cotton-spinner, of Barlow's Gate. No man is such an idiot as to prefer the society of the best friend that breathes to that of a pretty sister. This is a shocking reflection; but it is true. Vincent Godfrey recognized it; Lottie Fairchild, nothing loth, accepted it. Within one brief week, the curate's son and the cotton lord's daughter were vowing eternal constancy. They rode out into the country, barely tolerating the necessary companionship of Cyril, and taking a mean advantage of that gentleman's timid horsemanship, to gallop recklessly over road and field, with the view of out-distancing him. This manœuvre gave them numerous uninterrupted half-hours, every moment of which was turned to full account; and, as everybody knows, when a young lady's face is flushed with the healthy vigour of a smart spin across country, and her cavalier's blood is roused by the same means, more love-making can be done in five minutes than in five hours under ordinary conditions.

Sometimes the young folks read poetry—or, rather, armed themselves with poetic material—on the lawn. Poor Cyril was a plain hard-headed fellow—one of the best conveyancers known in the present day—who yawned consumedly over this part of the day's programme, smoked until his thorax was as dry as gutta-percha, and wondered what the deuce Godfrey and Lottie could have to talk about in undertones, with their confounded heads so close together over a book. There were theatres and concerts in Manchester to fill up a few evenings; and somehow it was always arranged that Cyril outside should take the reins on the return journey—a clear hour's delicious spooning for the lovers.

By-and-bye, the young people grew tired of the deadly stillness and idle machinery so strange to them all, and spent a month at Blackpool; then Cyril took Godfrey to Scotland before Michaelmas Term; and the year was completed by a frosty Christmas spent at Barlow's Gate.

Too poor, and too uncertain of his prospects, to positively propose to Adam Fairchild for his daughter, Vincent Godfrey was proud to make it appear that he was the young lady's accepted lover; but by Christmas, Lottie was less fervent in her demonstrations. The winter which hardened the puddles seemed also to have cooled—if not frozen—her affections. Godfrey was saddened and surprised at her behaviour at the few balls and parties which came with the festive season. She was too gushing with her partners, and clung to them with unnecessary clinginess in the mazy movements of the waltz. Once the swain ventured to plead for a trifle more favour, and she laughed at him, for a "jealous old Coke-upon-Lyttelton."

"I have your promise not to forget me," he murmured, when the moment of parting arrived.

"Don't be silly," she said. "Of course I shall not forget you."

Altogether it was a dull journey back to town.

If the subsequent love-making of our young turtle-doves had ever been taken out of a brief-bag in Westminster Hall, Mr. Clay Ment, Q.C., might have added to his far-spread fame by the letters which passed between Lancashire and London. He might have pointed out to the enlightened gentlemen, who were executing the palladium business with so much neatness and dispatch, that Miss Fairchild's letters—now hot, now cold; now long, now short; now elaborate, now hasty—showed, if a wayward wildness, yet, on the whole, undoubted protestation of affection. Had he put Mr. Godfrey into the box, he might have led the witness on to describe how, while the document marked No. 1 acted upon him like an iced shower-bath, No. 2 had warmed his soul with the power of a patent cooking-stove. Cross-examined with that adroitness through which Claretto, Q.C., has become the pet of a common jury and the idol of his (successful) clients, the witness might have distinctly proved serious interruption to his studies, interference with his appetite and consequent chaff from his fellow-students, and periodical harrowing of the emotions known under the generic title of "feelings." But none of this interesting evidence is to be found upon the judge's note-book for an obvious reason. (*Vide* comic history of Spanish Fleet.)

The ups and down of the Lottie and Vincent correspondence did not check the advance of spring, or seriously interfere with the supervention of summer. In the dog-days—a month either way makes no difference—the two law-students, seizing an opportunity when their miscellaneous bills had reached a preposterous number, locked their chambers, pinned "Gone into the country" under the door-knocker, and caught the express from Euston to the north.

Lottie looked charming on appearing at the breakfast-table next morning. She was a fair lady; her hair was not only all her own, but its golden colour was genuine also. Then she was of clear white complexion—a point to be borne in mind, because golden hair (poets and Romancists notwithstanding) sometimes crowns a face that, if not florid, always impresses you with the notion that it will become so on the slightest provocation. Her eyes, when bright, were terribly witching, and then nobody appeared to agree upon their colour; but when they did not laugh, they were a grey-blue. But why pursue the description? It is not fair to deal with a lady as if she were a sale, and you an auctioneer's catalogue. At the same time, Godfrey did once say Lottie's mouth was a trifle spoilt by the too thin lips, and that her hands and feet, "like the hands and feet of most fair women," the impudent fellow added, might have been smaller without endangering their utility. This, however, was after the events which will now, without any more ado, be described.

"Let us go and fish for an hour," Cyril said to Godfrey, during their first breakfast at Barlow's Gate.

Godfrey was troubled in spirit. Lottie had carefully avoided him, intriguing as much now to keep out of his way as she once did to secure limitless *tête-à-têtes.* She stared at him when he tried to touch her foot with his Levant leather shoe, and dodged it. A sly pressure of the hand under the damask table-cloth, gallantly attempted, ignominiously failed.

"Will you go, Lottie?" he dismally asked.

"Thanks, Mr. Godfrey, but I'm busy this morning," she answered, cool and polite.

The young men procured rods and tackle, and walked out to the "lodges." Perhaps the reader requires enlightenment as to this term. A lodge in Lancashire is not the lodge in a garden of cucumbers you read of in the old Book; it is a reservoir used for mill purposes, and varies in size according to the magnitude of the manufactory. At Barlow's Gate there were two lodges, each perhaps fifty yards long, by twenty wide, and of a uniform depth of four feet.

"Good heavens! you don't mean to say this is where we have to fish?" Vincent exclaimed. "Why, it's as muddy and stagnant as a horse-pond!"

Laughing at his companion's expression of horror, Cyril said,

"Oh, yes! we may smoke our pipe here as well as elsewhere; and there are quantities of tench and bream to be had for the catching."

So, enclosed within stone walls pierced by a doorway leading to the kitchen garden, and within sight of the deserted works where, but for the cotton-famine, hundreds of men and women would have been merrily ranged before the bright and noisy machines, the gentlemen who twenty hours before had sauntered arm-in-arm through Temple Bar, sat down to their extraordinary angling. They smoked and watched their floats.

"I can't make out Lottie," Godfrey said; "she avoids me."

"She doth," quoth Cyril, sententiously.

"She treats me ill."

"She do."

"It is painful and puzzling to me."

"It are."

"Don't mock me, Fairchild," Godfrey said, sadly. "You know how fond I was—how fond I am of her!"

"Vincent, I ought to have warned you of this before. Lottie is the most arrant flirt in Lancashire. I knew last year that she was simply flirting with you, because there was nothing else to do, and no one else to flirt with," Cyril seriously observed.

"Fairchild, I don't want to quarrel with you, but you are the first man I ever met who slandered his own sister, and such a sister as Lottie!"

"Good! Go your own gait, as they say hereabouts. I tell you, I am ashamed to say, the truth. If I thought at first that you had been in earnest, I would have warned you."

"I must see Lottie, and hear her own explanation," Godfrey said.

"That's the best way," the other answered. "Egad! you have a bite. See, the float is gone."

"If such things had life, I should say that it was a bale of cotton," Godfrey remarked, as, with a heavy, dead pull, something made a slow travelment to the end of the lodge, returned, crossed, and re-crossed.

"No, it's a big fish, sure enough," Fairchild excitedly shouted. "Give him line while I run for something."

He brought a bucket, and eager to see the sight ran Lottie, the cook, the housemaids, and the page boy. The brute, whatever it was, was in no hurry to leave his home. Mr. Godfrey humoured his tardiness, and at length the rude vessel received him.

"Hang it!" said Fairchild: "it's Lottie's carp."

"Oh! it's Miss Lottie's carp," chorused the domestics.

"My poor, dear, pet carp!" cried Lottie. "I hate you, Mr. Godfrey! I hate you! You caught it on purpose."

It was useless to deny it or apologize; the carp was completely done for. It was a nasty, slimy, fat beast, of immense size and some age, and the greedy way in which he had taken the hook into his roomy gullet rendered it impossible to return him alive to the water. If Vincent Godfrey had robbed a church he could not have looked more guilty, and he never found an opportunity that day, nor the next, of coming to an explanation with Miss Fairchild. Before leaving Barlow's Gate, however, though she would admit of no explanation of her coolness, and permit none of the endearments to which the supplicant thought he had a right, some sort of friendliness was restored. For days he suffered from a tedious malady. Congestions and indigestions are to be shunned; water on the brain, it is said, is a sad affliction; but what is the remedy for carp on the mind? The offended beauty must be conciliated, and the peace offering must be in kind.

Mr. Vincent Godfrey, therefore, studied the natural history of the carp, and carried out a brilliant design which had flashed like a ray of genius into his soul. In one of his researches in the British Museum he found the following words:

"The age to which carp attain is very great, and several well-authenticated instances are adduced of its considerably exceeding a century at least. Many of those which were introduced into the ponds at Versailles, &c., in the reign of Louis the Fourteenth (say 1690), are either still living, or at least were so a very short time before the French Revolution (of 1830)."

This afforded him consolation. Rummaging further, he alighted upon another crumb of comfort, thus:

"I will close up this chapter with a relation of Gesner's, in his epistle to the Emperor Ferdinand, prefixed before his booke 'De Piscibus,' touching the long life of a pike, which was cast into a pond or poole, near Hailebrune, in Suabia, with this inscription, ingraven upon a collar of brass, fastened about his necke: '*Ego sum ille piscis hinc stagno omnium primus impositus per mundi Rectoris Frederici Secundi*, *manus* 5 *Octobris*, *anno* 1230.' He was again taken up in the year 1497, and by the inscription it appeared he had then lived there 267 yeares."

These whiffs of ancient and fishlike lore now mingled with the smoke of many a pipe in Godfrey's chamber. A carp not less than twenty-four inches long was advertised for, and the housekeeper was worried to the verge of the grave by the slouching vagabonds who presented themselves at the door "about this 'ere corpe, mum."

Vincent secured his fish at last, and that night a solemn conclave sat in Vincent's chamber. An iron bucket stood in the centre of the group, with a splashing, blue-brown, sheepy-eyed fish writhing within. Libations were poured down the throats of the learned assembly, pipes were kindled, and there then followed a great carp debate. Godfrey produced a neat broad-hooped ring of pure gold. It bore the inscription—

Lottie's Carp.

Sam Sargent, escaped from hospital for a few hours, produced his surgical instruments, and Benson's obliging young artificer, who had been summoned for the purpose, stood by to lend his aid in the touching ceremony.

First came the catching of the carp: done after a terrific struggle between it and Godfrey. Two of the most delicately-fingered of the company then held the fish down upon a newspaper on the floor; the surgeon operated; the goldsmith knelt low, and bent over the victim; and behold, loud hurrahs proclaimed the deed worthily performed. The ring had been firmly and artistically affixed at the root of the carp's tail without wounding the creature's body. It was then formally returned to the bucket, the water was changed every hour, and the fish seemed proud of his new appendage. This was the general supposition, for it thereafter manifested a desire to hoist its broad tail out of the water, although it was compelled to stand on its head, with snout touching the bottom of the bucket, in order to maintain its proud position with becoming grace.

How was this highly-honoured *Cyprinus carpio* to be conveyed from London to Lancashire? Fairchild, eventually, was elected a deputation by the meeting, and instructed to deposit the fish in the lodge at Barlow's Gate at the dead of night, or, at all costs, unknown to the world; the means of transit and other details being left entirely to himself. A learned angler had recommended that the fish should be kept wrapped up in wet moss, in which luxurious state, he pledged his piscatorial honour, it would, though in a lingering kind of fashion, live several days. This advice, it was understood, was followed, and, it had better be at once assumed, successfully.

How many months flew by it matters not. The cotton famine was still sore in the land. The operatives, generally the quietest of men, broke out here and there into commotion; ugly alarms of riot were rife. "Our own Correspondent,' "Our special Correspondent," "Our own Commissioner," "Our special Reporter," and all the other journalistic specialities of this age of big type, went down to the scene of trouble. Amongst them went down "Our special Artist"—none other than Mr. Vincent Godfrey, who used to add to his modest income by his pencil. He was a very deft sketcher, and could throw in the details of a passing scene with singular speed; was, in fact, quite a short-hand special artist.

Our special Artist, *pro tem.*, arrived at Chowchump on the evening before a disturbance, which threatened, at one time of the day, to assume the proportions of a sanguinary riot. An angry and excited mob in the forenoon filled the market-place. In a street at the back of the Town Hall a troop of dragoons was drawn up ready for action; inside the Town Hall, and at the station, the police were equipped with cutlasses. The mob glared at these warlike preparations; and Godfrey, from the window of the Bobbin Arms, with the large carpenter's pencil which he affected, reproduced the scene.

The operatives and their wives were irritated and —poor wretches!—hungry; but they meant no harm, nor would have done any if a stupid police-sergeant had not marched a ragged, hatless, shoeless prisoner across the square towards the Town Hall. The man had been slashed across the forehead with a police cutlass, and his face was seamed with ruddy streaks. This the mob saw: stones were handy: in a few moments a shower of missiles was flying across at the line of police.

The Mayor, a brave little fellow, with a few brother magistrates behind him, walked towards the mob in the face of the volley, imploring the people to disperse. Failing in this sensible attempt, he read the Riot Act, and the cavalry were brought round under strict orders not to act till the last extremity. The mob hooted, the stones fell. The officer of dragoons, a handsome young fellow, received a brickbat, well jagged at the edge, upon his cheek, and the blood streamed down upon the facings of his uniform. The cavalry were on the point of charging; but the mob at the first glimmer of drawn swords beat a precipitate retreat.

At the moment when the officer received the brickbat on his manly face, a piercing shriek arose from the upper windows of the Town Hall, the shriek of a woman—of a woman in distress. From his hostelry, Godfrey, ever sympathetic to female sorrows, looked across just in time to see his sweet Lottie throwing up her arms, and falling back in the regulation way into the arms of the usual friend who is ready to assist at the customary fainting-fit.

It was not easy for him to fight his way out of the Bobbin Arms, through the throng, by the dragoons and police, up the Town Hall steps, and into the building; but the passionate Vincent, with patience and push, carried the position, and rushed headlong into the Mayor's private apartments. In the very first room he saw something which brought him up sharply, with a round turn, as it were. The handsome officer of dragoons reclined gracefully in an easy-chair, and fair Lottie hung over him, saying,

"Dear, dear Charlie! are you sure you are not hurt?"

"No, darling! only a scratch," the warrior gasped, sensible enough, however, to clutch Lottie's hand by way of enforcing the assurance.

If Mr. Vincent Godfrey had been a man of ordinary mould, he would have wept, or swore, or rent his garments, or lapsed into tragedy. He would have seized his hair with the left hand pretending to root a few parcels out, and uplifting the right, he would, in sepulchral tones, have declaimed probably thus: "Perfidious maiden! is it thus my honest love is requited? Ah me! my bleeding heart! But no! a time will come!" Then, smiting his eyes with the palm of his hand, as if to dam up torrents of tears, he would have bolted blindly from the room.

But Godfrey cared for none of these things. No whining, no appeals, no reproaches for him. His heart ceased to beat, it must be confessed, when the interesting spectacle burst upon him; but it soon thumped on again as before. The special artist triumphed over the man. He took out his sketchbook, and quietly edging under the lee of a screen, made a picture of the *tableau*, finding, as he afterwards remarked, inexpressible consolation in every stroke of the pencil. His rapid drawing here did him good service: it enabled him to step out of the room, in the prevailing commotion, unseen, or, if not unseen, unnoticed.

"Who's your Mayor?" he inquired of the landlady, on returning to the hotel.

"Jonathan Fairchild," she said.

"Fairchild! Any connection of the Fairchilds of Barlow's Gate?"

"Yes, sir. Mr. Adam Fairchild is the Mayor's brother, and Miss Charlotte is staying yon' now."

"Indeed?" said Godfrey.

"Ay," added the landlady, "I shouldn't be surprised if she weds that cavalry officer. He's been quartered here a month, and Miss Lottie, as they call her, and him are always together."

"So, so! Such things will happen, you know," was the young man's laughing reply.

The same evening Lottie received the following note:

"LOTTIE,—Permit me to ask what is your relation to the dragoon whom you were fondling this afternoon at the Town Hall? I accidentally saw you. You called him 'Dear, dear Charley.' He called you his darling. Pardon my inquisitiveness: who is he, and what is he to you?—VINCENT GODFREY."

In the envelope was enclosed the finished drawing of the scene.

Next day a messenger sought out the writer of the above and handed him a note, in which these words were dashed boldly on the paper with a furious pen:

"SIR,—My relation to the gentleman you saw me, as you coarsely say, *fondling*, is simply explained. I am *engaged* to him, and I *am* his darling. It is nothing to you, and you are nothing to ME."

"So be it," Godfrey wrote back: "only there is no necessity for quarrelling over the matter. I forgive you, and shall always be glad to meet you, and wish you well as your friend, "V. G."

And so it was.

Captain Carstairs and Lottie, nevertheless, were never married; and her brother begged not to be questioned on the subject. Once, off his guard, he referred to the captain as "a mercenary cad," and to Lottie as "a fickle flirting fool;" whereupon his friend rebuked him for unbrotherly language.

Before sailing for India, Vincent Godfrey paid a final visit to Barlow's Gate, and found Lottie as pretty as ever, and as eager for flirtation as in the old days; but Godfrey, being no longer under her spell, talked to her with almost blunt plainness.

"Don't look bewitching at me, Lottie: don't put that soft tone into your voice. You cured me in a moment a long time ago, and the cure, I assure you, was magical in its completeness."

Thus commencing, they strolled into the garden, through the narrow door in the wall, and out by the lodges. The water was unruffled; the works still deserted and noiseless with the misfortune of years.

"You told me once, hereabouts," Godfrey observed, halting under the wall, "that you hated me."

"Oh, no, I never hated you," she quickly said; "but I was peevish."

"Perhaps," continued Godfrey—"perhaps that was so. No, I do not believe you hated me, for—don't be angry, Lottie—for you haven't heart enough to love or hate worthy of the name."

Then, after a pause:

"Look!" she said; "what is that?"

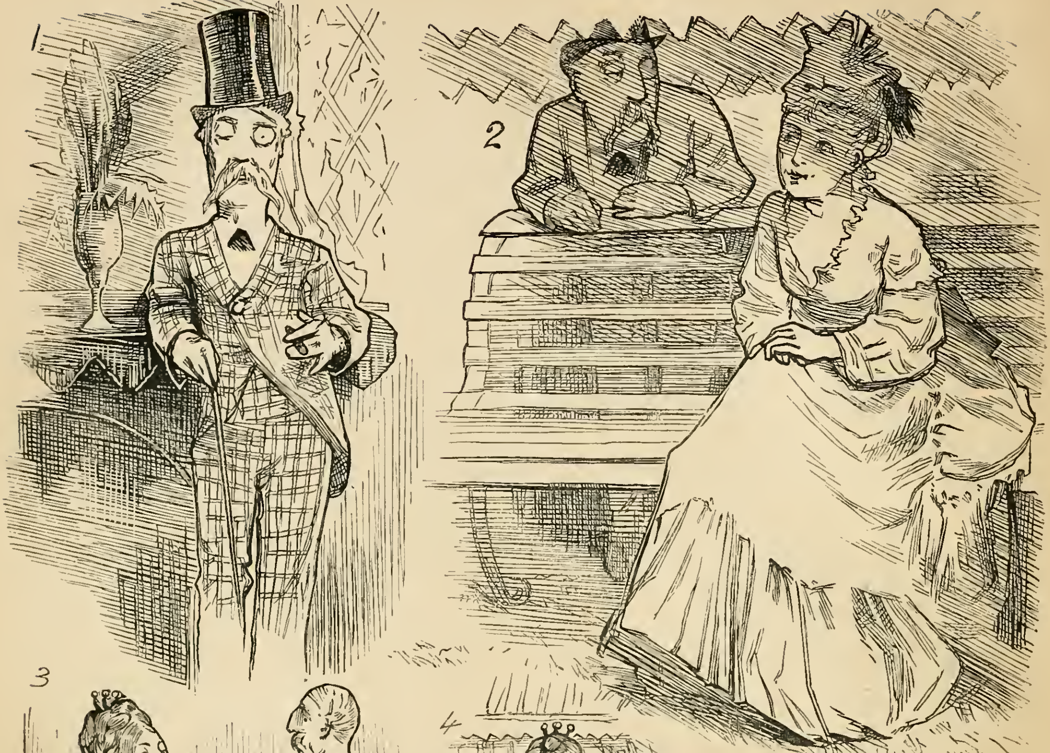
A heavy dark object, on the opposite side of the lodge, was slowly circling on the surface of the water. It began to splash and revolve with increasing vigour; it shot across the lodge; circled feebly again; turned over on its side, and floated loglike.

Lottie and her companion walked round until they could reach it; and Vincent, seizing it by the shoulders, landed a great dying fish. He removed a bit of aquatic weed from its tail, and Miss Fairchild turned pale when he tore out and presented to her a tarnished ring, upon which black mud had filled up and made very conspicuous the letters

Lottie's Carp.

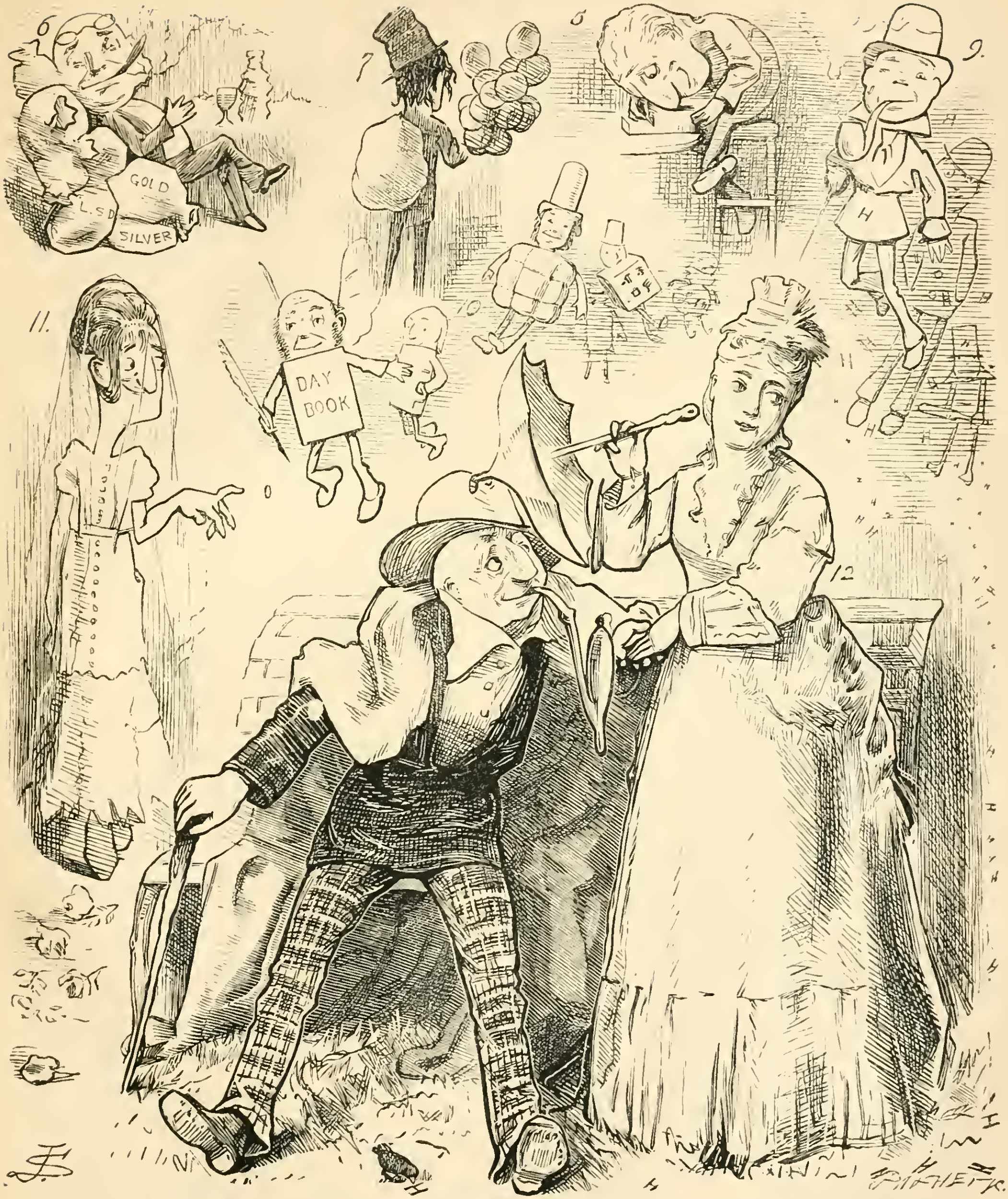
W. SENIOR.

SOCIAL ADULTERATION.


1.
2
3
4
DIRECTOR
DARWIN
PEERAGE
DEBRETT
SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL
5

1. The Hon. Maurice Fitz-Maurice de Vere was anxious to purchase a wife, but he required one of blue blood and unadulterated descent.
2. Now the question came up, was Amaryllis Whiffles an Adulterated Article?
3. So the Hon. Maurice went to his particular friend, Lady Snubbum
4. Who retired to her laboratory,
5. And appointed a committee.

SOCIAL ADULTERATION.



Having carefully analysed their subject, the Committee were enabled to report the following adulterations:—

6. An uncle who had had the audacity to make his own way in the world.
7. Another, who hadn't.
8. Worse: a first cousin who was positively a comic artist
9. Several distant cousins who dropped their H's.
10. And a number of remote relatives connected with commerce.
11. After this, Miss W. was of course out of the question, but the Committee found the Hon. Maurice a really pure article of the most unimpeachable ancestry;
12. While the Adulterated Article was palmed off upon the Hon. Maurice's uncle, who was eccentric and not particular.

THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK.

"THIS, I am sure, is the flower of the flock!
She stands like a rock in her lilac frock;
She speaks as clear as a cuckoo clock;
The little dear is sweet to hear
And sweet to see—the flower is she—
The flower of the flock in her dear little shoes!"

Now, then, hearken to Heavenly Muse!
First, the metaphor we excuse,
Wishing it better. For what you say—
(Thank Heaven! the children are all away)—
That may be rather more hard to fit,
And Heavenly Muse objects to it.
You are not sage; your patronage
  Vexes the tender household heart,
And ruffles depths you cannot gauge.
  Why do you place this child apart?—
They all are flowers for different hours:
  Pray, mould your praise with a kindlier art.

Ah, what a garden, in need of pardon,
From all but parents whose hearts are warrants,—
Ah, what a garden—pitying powers!—
Is many a garden of parents' flowers!
One of the flowers has a sad club-foot,
And one is blind, and one is mute;
One poor flower has a broken spine;
One is as wicked as Devil's wine;
One was born with but half his wits,
And one is scarred, and one has fits!—
Why, these are pretty flowers indeed
For so much love and gardening heed—
A jest? Yet if you try to laugh,
You find you cannot do it half!

No: all through the long human years
Such gardens are, and it appears
As if the flowers were bright with tears,
That catch the sunshine, and diffuse
A thousand iridescent hues.

No: do not smile at Heavenly Muse,
But mind her. Who are you to choose
This child or that for the flower of the flock?
(The metaphor we do excuse.)
It is not a step, or a voice, or a frock,
Or a sash, or even a pair of shoes
(Not to speak of wit or beauty,
Gentleness, or zeal in duty)
That makes the choice flower in the garden,
(Which seems to stand in need of pardon)—
The flower that fairest, sweetest blows.
What is the secret, then? God knows;
And when Love smiles, and says, "My rose!"
To what might else go derelict,
Who has the heart to contradict?
God makes the love the need to suit;
But, for the secret, Love is mute:
She cherishes the thing forlorn—
  She says, "This mortal is but night!"
She weeps, "Would God that it were morn,—
  My flower will bloom when it is light!"
The tempered wind around them blows
The secret that God only knows,
And still Love whispers, "Ah, my rose!"

THE AUTHOR OF "LILLIPUT LEVEE."

A PHOTOGRAPHIC COURTSHIP.

"WHY, Murrray, what a swell you are to-day! You look as if you had been to a wedding."

"Not a bad hit, Jack: I *have* been to a wedding. Willy Daly married your old sweetheart Nelly Guy this morning."

"That's a take-in, Murray; but it won't do: you needn't think you can humbug me."

"I shouldn't dream of *trying*, my boy. It's a fact; Nellie is married, and I gave her away."

"The deuce you did! horrid want of consideration for my feelings on your part, I must say. But I didn't know that Daly knew the Guys. I'm broken-hearted, of course; but *still* I should like to know how it came about?"

"*I* brought it about, my dear fellow," replied Murray, coolly; "that is to say, I and a certain photographic artist. He began the affair, I carried it on, and have finished it, as already intimated: given the happy pair my blessing, and started them off to Paris on their wedding tour."

"Now, Murray, do be serious for a moment," said Jack, a little testily, "and tell me, like a good fellow, what you mean by your nonsense."

"Nonsense indeed! I assure you, my lad, I am telling you the simple truth," answered his friend. Why should I mislead youth and innocence?"

"Now, are you going to leave off chaffing, and tell me what I want to know, or are you not? because I'm not going to waste my afternoon standing here while you amuse yourself at my expense," said poor Jack.

"Talking is dry work, my son," said Murray, slapping his sulky friend on the shoulder; "if you will stand a bottle of champagne, I'll tell you my story while we drink it. Is that a bargain?"

"All right, Murray: let us turn in here at the Wig and Maypole, and you shall have the champagne and tell your news."

"Not bad stuff considering," said Murray, after letting the wine bubble against his palate like a connoisseur. "But now, Jack, I won't tantalize you any more. Nelly and Daly really are married, and a photograph really had a great deal to do with it. The two met for the first time on board the Dieppe steamboat last summer. Pretty little Nellie was going home after her finishing term at Madame de Follet's, and Daly was returning from his holiday trip in time to spend the last week with me at Brighton. I had strolled down from the station to the wharf to meet Willie Daly, and was just in time to see the boat come in: he was one of the first to land, and we had only exchanged a word or two, when I turned round and saw poor Nellie struggling along the gangway, with a bag in one hand and a bandbox in the other; so of course I sprang forward to help her. I brought her and her packages safe on shore, and asked her where she was going. To the hotel, she told me. Her aunt, Mrs. Cookson, was there to meet her and a cousin who was coming over by the next boat. The following day they were going to Brighton—the aunt lives there, you know, Jack. As it happened, Daly and I were also going to stay that night, so I offered her my arm, and we walked up the road (only two hundred yards, you know) together. Daly strode by my side as mute as a fish; but Nellie talked and laughed and squeezed my arm in such an unaccountable way, growing red and pale alternately, that I found myself speculating as to whether my income would keep a girl in comfort, and thinking that Nellie Murray had not an unpleasant sound."

"Puppy!" muttered his listener.

Murray grinned. "Well," continued he, "when we reached the hotel door, Daly stopped for a moment to speak to the porter, who was bringing up the luggage, and as soon as his back was turned, Nellie gave my arm another squeeze, and said in a frightened whisper, 'Is the mad gentleman going to stay in this hotel too?' Sheer astonishment at this singular question prevented me from answering for a moment, and then Daly returning, sent Miss Nellie, with a hurried 'Good night!' flying upstairs after the waiter, who was leading the way to her aunt's rooms.

"'Good night at nine o'clock in the morning!' said I to myself, 'and 'the mad gentleman!' What the dickens does the girl mean?' I was just going to ask Willie what it was all about, but he looked so uncommonly glum that I concluded to wait a bit, and not ask any questions till he had been comforted with liquor and soothed with a pipe. I was wise!"

"Solomon!" growled Jack.

Murray bowed as to a well-deserved compliment, and drank another glass of champagne.

"It was not till Daly was in the middle of his second pipe," continued he, "that his tongue was fairly loosened, and then he suddenly asked me, 'Who is that girl?' 'What girl?' said I, cautiously. 'You know, you brought her up here from the boat.' 'Don't you know? Why, that was Miss Guy—little Nellie Guy: you must have heard me speak of her.' 'H'm! And what made her bolt in such a hurry?' asked Daly. 'My dear fellow,' said I; 'you ought to be able to answer that question better than I can. What had you been saying or doing to frighten her?' Frighten her!' cried Willie, indignantly; 'I am not in the habit of frightening women. What makes you think she was frightened?' Well, well,' said I, soothingly, the words 'the mad gentleman' stirring up unpleasant ideas, 'tell me what passed between the two of you, and then, perhaps, I can explain matters.' 'Nothing particular passed,' said Willie, half smiling, and reddening a little. 'I helped her on board, and she thanked me very prettily; then I found her a snug seat sheltered from the wind, and sat down beside her, of course. We got into conversation, talked about Dieppe, and her school, and so on, and we passed the time very pleasantly till the steamer began to roll a little, when she said she would go to the cabin, and lie down for an hour. I asked her to come on deck again soon, and Miss Guy, as you call her, showed her pretty white teeth, with a charming smile, and nodded her curly head with perfect good humour; so I had not frightened her then. Well, of course I was on the look-out, and went to meet her as soon as she reappeared. We took up our quarters in the old sheltered place near the funnel: I got her some coffee and a roll, and did all I could to make the little girl comfortable and keep her amused, and I certainly thought we were getting on famously.'

"Well, Jack, I won't bore you with a repetition of the chatter of a merry little schoolgirl and a young fellow, who, by his own account, was getting more spooney every minute. You know the style of thing —who better? Nellie made fun of her schoolmistress, and entertained Willie with an account of the tricks she and 'the other girls' used to play. Willie laughed at the sea-sick Frenchmen, quizzed the old ladies with their maids and lap-dogs, and related his blunders and mishaps in Paris. Daly's knowledge of French is vague—to put it mildly; but he makes up for that by daring invention, and his extraordinary shots at words and expressions make his conversation like a series of riddles; so I have no doubt he kept little Nellie very well amused. It appears that, at last, Daly got confidential, and showed her a photograph of himself taken at Paris. So far all seemed to have gone on well enough; but from the moment he put the photograph-case into her hand, Daly said the girl seemed transformed—she closed the case in a great hurry, and gave it back, as if she thought it would bite. Her face turned so white that Willie thought she was sea-sick, and wanted to fetch her some brandy; but she shook her head. Just at that moment a man-servant came up to get a carpet-bag from behind the box on which Daly was seated. He moved off, and went round at the back of the funnel, intending to come out the other side of Nellie; but, Hey, presto! like a trick in a pantomime, the girl had disappeared! The sea or the ladies' cabin had swallowed her, and Daly saw her no more till all the passengers landed at Newhaven; and then Nellie wouldn't even look at him. This was very odd, certainly. 'Were you getting too sentimental?' asked I. 'Are you sure you didn't squeeze her fingers as you gave her the photograph-case?' 'No, indeed, on my honour! I did nothing of the sort. I am certain I did nothing whatever to give the young lady the slightest ground for offence.' 'Well, it is very strange,' said I: 'there must be some mistake in the matter, Daly; and if you wish it set right—as, of course, you do—the best plan will be for me to go after dinner, and ask little Nellie for an explanation.' The fact was, I was not a little curious to know what had made Nellie think that poor Willie was out of his mind.

"Daly jumped at my offer, and proposed we should fill up the time till dinner by a stroll on the shore. We had only taken one or two turns, and Daly, after inflicting on me various poetical rhapsodies on the subject of Nellie's charms, and bewildering us both with absurd surmises as to the cause of the change in her manner, was beginning to be more himself again, when we met Mrs. Cookson and Nellie, who had also come out to enjoy the breeze and get up an appetite for dinner. Nellie looked pale, and I was about to stop and ask how she felt, when, with a look of alarm, that was unmistakeably reflected in her aunt's face, she hurried past us with Mrs. Cookson, barely acknowledging our salute.

"Willie Daly pulled up short and turned round to me with a wonderfully puzzled and disturbed countenance. 'Murray,' cried he, 'you are quite right: the girl *is* frightened of me. I saw it in her eyes. For the love of Heaven, take a good look at me, and tell me what's the matter. I don't look drunk or mad, do I? I have not put on my grandmother's gown, or her coachman's wig, in a fit of absence of mind? For pity's sake, man! tell me if there is anything queer about me? Or, stop—Miss Guy is not out of her mind, is she? Upon my word, there was an awfully odd look in her eyes just now!' 'Hold on, Willie,' said I; "don't shout so loud: you will frighten half the parade. Come and sit down on this bench, and I'll inspect you properly.' Daly meekly did as I bid him, and I can tell you, Master Jack, when I looked critically at the fellow's stalwart figure, sunburnt face, laughing blue eyes, and sunny curly hair, I thought him as little calculated to frighten a girl away as any man I ever knew, and in sober terms I conveyed as much to him. 'What the deuce is the matter, then? Miss Guy looked as if she had seen a whole family of ghosts,' said he. Talking brought no solution of the mystery, so we fell back on our former resolution—that I should go after dinner, and ask an explanation.

"About five o'clock, my curiosity being by that time hot and strong, I left Willie in my rooms, and went to Mrs. Cookson's. I tapped at the door, and hearing a faint 'come in,' I entered. Nellie started up from the sofa with a half-strangled shriek, and was evidently about to fly into the next room, when, perceiving I was alone, she dropped back into her seat, a trembling heap of muslin and ribbons, and said, with a gasp, 'Oh, Mr. Murray! I was so terrified. I thought the mad gentleman was with you. 'No, Miss Guy,' said I, quietly seating myself beside her, 'I am quite alone.' And then I was silent, knowing by long experience that the less you ask a woman the more she tells you. 'What a terrible pity! Such a fine young fellow!' began Mrs. Cookson. 'Yes, aunt; and so good-looking, too,' says Nellie. 'So gentleman-like.' 'And such nice manners.' 'Such frank-looking blue eyes. And he has a clever face too. I should never have suspected he was mad, if Nellie had not told me.' 'And he can talk as well as most sane people, if not better. Yes, it's a dreadful pity!' Then turning to me, Nelly said, with a sigh, 'Has he been long so, Mr. Murray?' 'How did you find out he *was so*, Miss Guy?' said I, fencing. 'Oh!' said Nelly, shaking her curls, 'I should not have found it out at all, perhaps, if the stewardess had not told me there was a mad gentleman on board the steamer with his servant. The poor fellow talked so pleasantly, and was so merry and amusing, that I quite looked forward to meeting him again. When I went down to the cabin, and the stewardess began to tell us about the mad gentleman, and pointed out the servant who had charge of him, I did not think for a moment that she referred to my nice new friend. When I went on deck again, of course I felt just a little nervous, and I looked about for the madman. It certainly did cross my mind that the poor fellow I had been talking to looked just a little wild: his hair was blown about so, and he seemed so *very* pleased I had come on deck.' 'A striking proof of sanity, I should say, Miss Guy,' interrupted I. 'Ah,' said she, with another shake of the pretty head, 'the worst is to come. We had coffee so comfortably together—I shudder to think of it! We talked a long while, and he made me laugh a great deal, and I had quite forgotten my fears—when, all of a sudden, he said, "I have had my portrait taken as a present for my sister. Isn't it a good likeness?" and, with such an odd laugh, he put a photograph-case into my hands. Of course I opened it, and there, to my intense horror, was a coloured photo of a fat, rosy, podgy old woman, with a horrible squint and a big frilled cap on! I nearly gave a scream, and our mad friend came a little closer, and asked if the portrait wasn't like him? So I shut it up as quickly as I could, and gave it him back, and was just thinking whether I hadn't better run over to some ladies for protection, when he asked me if I wouldn't like some brandy. I was horribly frightened; but, fortunately, his servant came at that moment and took him away. I jumped up directly and ran down to the ladies' cabin, and there I stayed till we arrived. Oh, dear me! I haven't got over the fright yet. But tell me, Mr. Murray—has he been long mad, poor young fellow?' 'It cannot be very long, Miss Guy,' said I, as gravely as I could, 'for he was quite sane when I saw him about six months ago.' 'It must have been rather sudden, then,' said Nellie, plaintively: 'what drove him mad, I wonder?' Then, with a slight accession of uneasiness—'Is he going to stay with you, Mr. Murray?' 'My friend, Willie Daly, is going to stay with me at Brighton for a week,' said I; 'but if *he* is mad, Miss Guy, there must have been two madmen on board, for I saw carried down the hotel stairs this afternoon, a poor lunatic, whose mania consisted in imagining himself a corpse; and I heard the people say that he crossed from Dieppe last night in your boat.' 'Then Mr. Daly is not mad!' cried Mrs. Cookson. 'It is Miss Nellie's doing if he is,' said I. 'But the servant!' gasped poor Nellie. 'Belonged to the corpse.' 'But he took him away!' 'To get at his master's travelling bag.' 'But the photograph?' 'Ah! that does require a little explanation. Suppose I bring Mr. Daly here to clear up the matter?' 'Pray do,' said Mrs. Cookson. Nellie did not second the invitation, she only hung down her head and blushed. 'All right,' said I, 'I'll fetch him.' And I bowed myself out of the room, highly amused at the absurdity of the whole affair. When I went back to Daly, I found him just sealing up a parcel. 'What are you doing?' said I. 'Sending off that blessed photo,' said Willie. 'Stop a bit, old fellow!' I said. 'I must have a look at it first. It was shabby of you to think of sending it off without showing it to me.' 'Oh, bother!' returned he; 'haven't you got the charming original before your eyes?' 'I'm not quite sure that I have,' said I, quietly, taking the packet from his hand as I spoke, and deliberately breaking the seals. 'Not quite sure that I'm charming? or not quite sure I'm original? Which do you mean?' asked Willie, laughing. 'I mean, I'm not quite sure that you are the original of this portrait,' answered I, opening the case, now free from its wrappings. And, as my eyes fell on the likeness of the portly old *bonne*, with her squint and her cap, I roared with laughter, even though Nellie's account had prepared me for what I should see. Daly came and looked over my shoulder. His horrified face, with the jaw dropped fifteen degrees, set me off again, and I stamped about the room shouting and laughing like a maniac. 'By Jove!' cried Daly, 'I've taken the wrong case from the studio table!'—and he, too, set off laughing, as he remembered how he had offered the old lady in her frilled cap as an excellent portrait of himself for poor Nellie's inspection! The laughing duet in our room became a regular chorus in Mrs. Cookson's, when we took the photograph there and explained the mistake. Nellie did not quite get over her shyness of Willie that night. She blushed a great deal, thinking, no doubt, of her lavish praises when she thought poor Daly anything but 'an eligible.' However, we all went in the same carriage to Brighton next day; and Nellie and Daly were such fast friends before the end of the week, that I foresaw what the result would be.

"We all four met again two months later. Nellie was on a long visit to her aunt, so I knew I should meet her when that Aquarium business took me down to Brighton, and I meant to quiz the little girl famously about her steamboat adventure. The matter, however, was already beyond a jest; for, on the night of my arrival, I overtook the pair walking arm-in-arm by moonlight on the parade. Willie had not lost much time, had he? As I came up behind them, I heard Nellie say, with a sly laugh, 'Well, then, perhaps——yes, if you are quite sure you are not mad.' 'I am neither mad nor an old woman, Nellie, my darling," answered he. "You will find me sane enough to know your value, and man enough to take proper care of you,' and then I could see that Nellie gave his arm a little squeeze. 'Of course you'll invite me to the wedding?' said I, laying my hand on Daly's shoulder. He turned round with a scowl, and Nellie gave her favourite little shriek. It was all right, however, when they saw who it was, and the invitation I had chaffingly asked for was heartily given. To-day, as I have already told you, Jack, was the happy day, and Miss Nellie Guy is now Mrs. Nellie Daly. My story is finished, and so is the Roederer. What next? Why, hallo! old man, where are you off to?"

"To the —— to be *photographed!*" said Jack, as he flung out of the place without turning his head.

"A—h!" said Murray, looking after him; "I'm afraid he was rather fond of Nellie!"

L. G. ADEY.

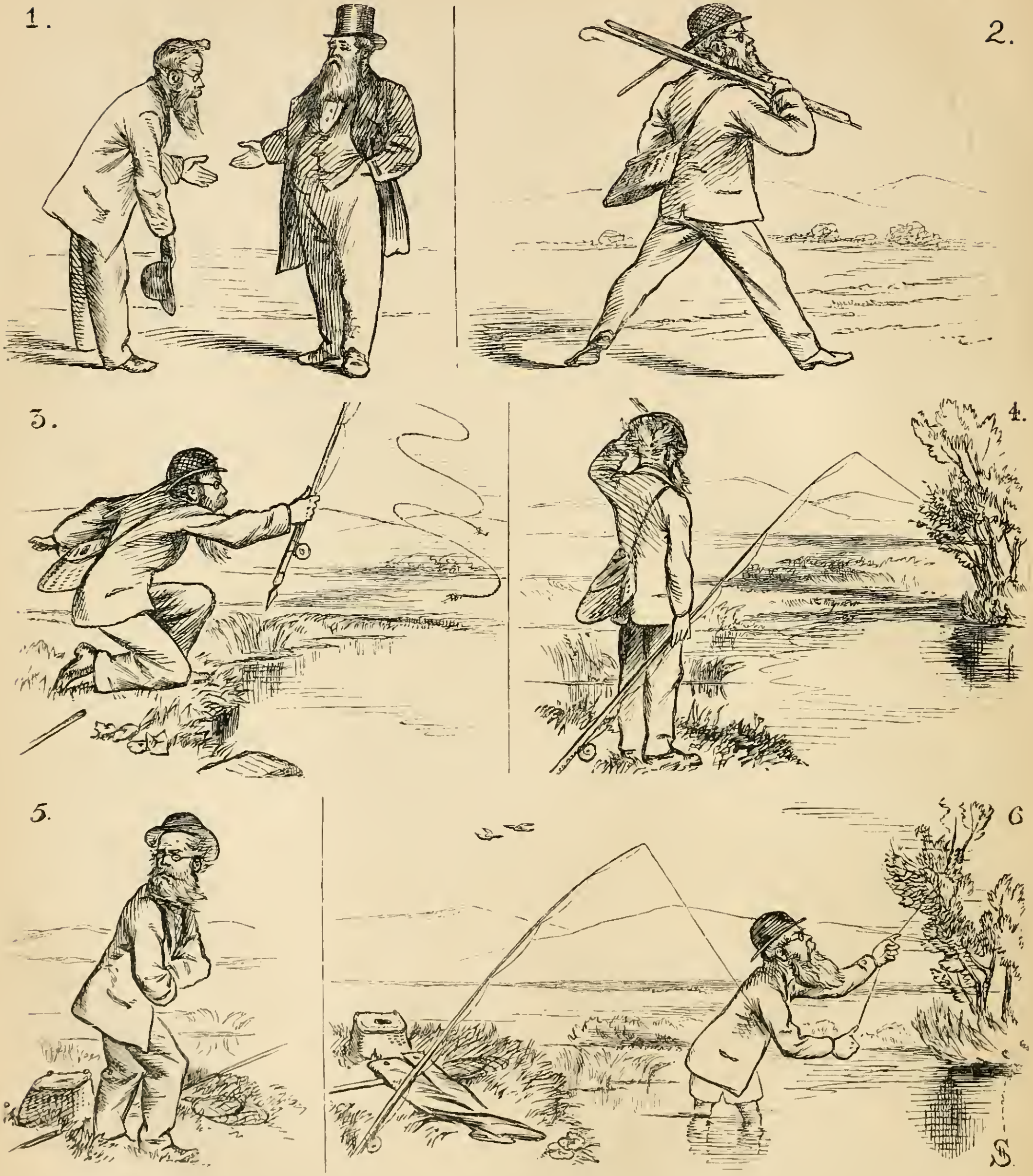
* * *

AN ALPHABETICAL "FIRST NIGHT."

A were the Actors, I saw in the Play;
B was the "Bosh," that I heard them all say;
C was the Cue, they did *not* learn by heart;
D was the Dickens, each played with his part;
E was the End—I rejoiced when it came!
F was the French, which suggested its frame;
G were the "Gods," who were loud in their wit;
H was the Hiss, that I heard from the pit;
I was the Int'rest, which did not increase;
J were the Judges, who dozed through the piece;
K were the Knaves, who applauded for hire;
L was the Little, I found to admire;
M was the Mess, they were in at the end;
N was the Noodle, who called for his friend.
O was the Order, I brought in my hand;
P was the Plot, I could not understand;
Q was the Quaff, I indulged in, of stout;
R was the Rubbish, I had to sit out;
S was the Scent, Rimmel put on the bill;
T was the Time, which the Play would not kill;
U was the Uproar, I heard at the close;
V was the Voice, that was first to oppose;
W the Wit, which grew less by degrees;
X were the Xtras, extorted as fees;
Y were the Yawns, which on all sides extended;
Z was my Zest, when the curtain descended.

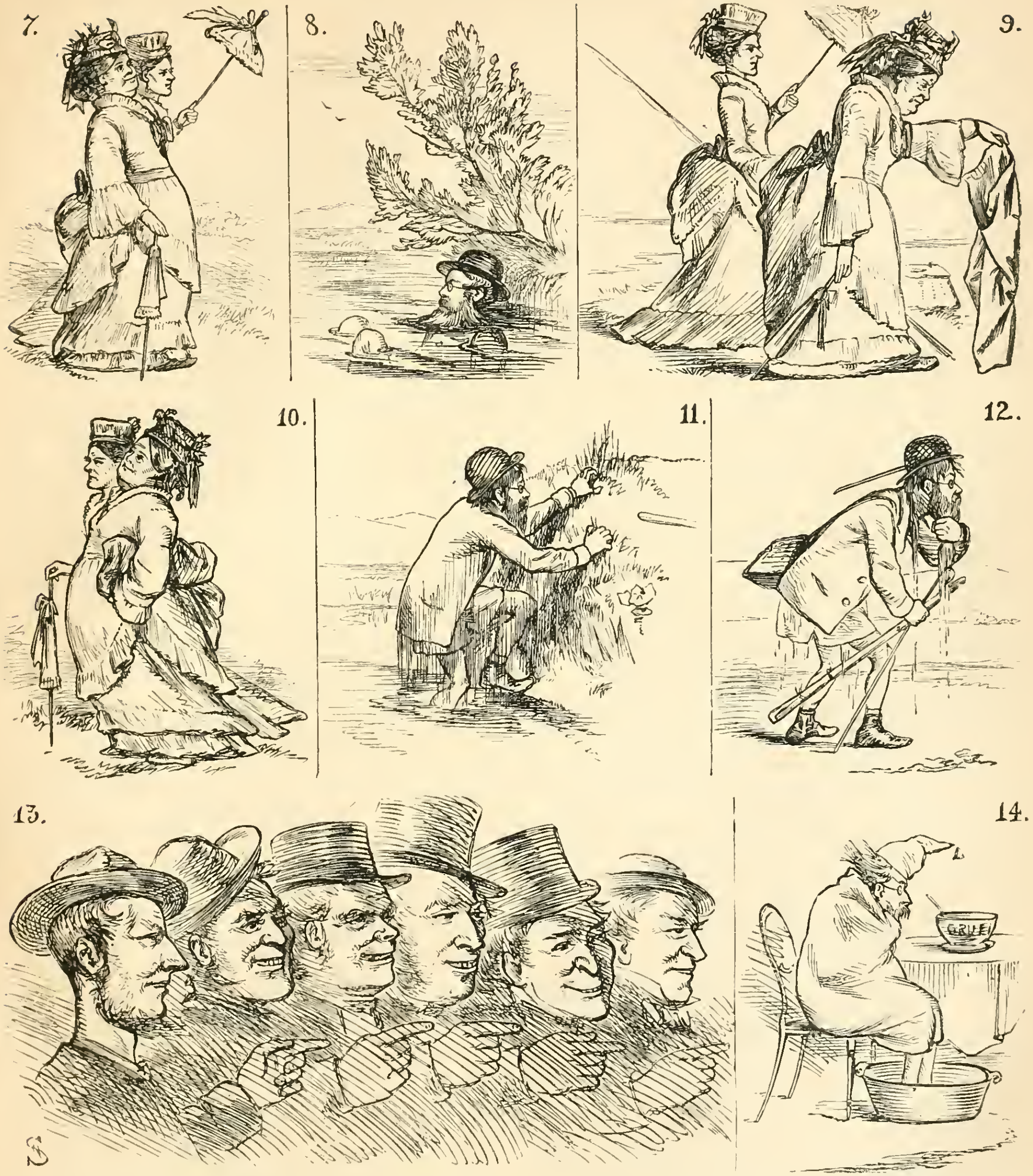
T. F. DILLON CROKER.

HOW I BECAME A HIGHLANDER.



1. Being very fond of trout-fishing, and knowing a fellow who owns some water, I propitiate the "riparian proprietor," get the requisite permission.
2 And proceed to the stream with anticipations ecstatic.
3. After various ineffectual casts,
4. I at length succeed in comfortably placing my favourite "Palmer" in a plaguy alder opposite.
5. There's nobody coming and the water is not very deep hereabouts, —I 'll rescue my fly. I divest myself of my t—— well, nether integuments, and
6. Wade across to unhitch.

HOW I BECAME A HIGHLANDER.



7. Heavens and earth! What *am* I to do now? Here come Mrs. Creamy Tartar and her daughter!
8. Concealment somehow! There's nothing for it but to duck,—duck I do;
9. Whilst they, not discovering me, examine my —— well "things."
10. Mrs. C. T., remarking how nicely they will come to "make up" for some of "her poor" (she is afflicted with the popular district-visiting craze), folds them under her arm and exit.
11. I emerge,
12. Wring myself out, and sneak home *a la* Highlander,
13. Amid the sort of sympathy a fellow receives in a ridiculous disaster.
14. Finale.

A FORCIBLE REMEMBRANCE.

WHEN first I knew Tom Wilson, the landlord of the White Horse and Warmingpan, a well-known sporting house, few people would have thought he had ever been one of the fastest pedestrians of his or any time. Fat, jolly, and possessed of a fair share of this world's goods, it was hard to imagine him getting his living in the hand-to-mouth manner peculiar to the journeymen of the sporting world; but, as he himself expressed it, he had served his time, nevertheless. Strange stories were told of his former career: how he had been in the "barneys" and "doubles" with which athletics are associated, and had participated in the "ropings" and "milkings" peculiar to the turf world. Some kind friends, particularly those whom he had assisted in days gone by, told strange stories about him, and roundly asserted that he had, upon emergency, played the part of professional pugilist. This latter I doubt, for Wilson was superior to any other man I ever met in even his station of licensed victualler, and there were few topics upon which he could not converse both sensibly and well. He rarely spoke of his pedestrian career; but one night, in a burst of confidence, and in his cozy bar-parlour as well, he told me how it was he first became connected with sporting, many years back. As well as I can remember it, the story ran thus:

The manner in which I drifted into the sporting world was somewhat peculiar. I had no more idea when I made my first running match of becoming a professional than you have now; but I won so easily, and was so immensely vain, that I accepted challenges as fast as they were given; and, in less than twelve months from the day of my first race, was regarded as the fastest sprint runner in London. There were no amateurs then, and men who wanted to run had to contend against a mixed lot.

My earliest conquest was over an old schoolfellow, who, having won three or four races, thought it great fun to enter into an engagement with me, and brought down all his friends and relations to lay odds on him and see him win. They were, however, sadly disappointed; for though they accomplished the first part of their task easily, the second portion of the programme was not nearly so satisfactory, inasmuch as there proved to be a difference of nearly ten yards between us in two hundred, which difference was all in favour of myself.

After this, I made many what were at the time called bad matches; but as improvement came rapidly with practice, I pulled through them all—often to no one's surprise more than my own—after having been informed on authority that I had not the ghost of a chance of winning.

You will, of course, understand by this, that I was not in the hands of any regular backer or trainer of pedestrians, otherwise my capabilities would have been easily discovered, and a good deal of money made out of them. My occupation did not allow of a regular course of training, my acquaintance with sporting men was of the most limited kind, and the money for my matches used to be found between half a dozen of us, chief among whom was a publican, at whose house we used to meet, and who was regarded by us as the incarnation of turf wisdom. I have since had occasion to considerably modify my opinion of his ability.

Early in the morning, and late in the evening, we used to start on our training expeditions: one, proud to carry the champion's shoes; another rejoicing in possession of the trunks; and all armed with short sticks, provided with thick boots, and protected by still thicker mufflers. On a piece of road in the neighbourhood of Hornsey, I galloped to my heart's content and the admiration of my friends; and I can assure you that we used to return home after these displays impressed with the idea we were the artfullest lot of young dogs in the metropolis.

I have before referred to my occupation. I was at the time holding a fairly responsible position in a City house, receiving good remuneration, and with a decent prospect of advancement. Therefore, you may guess, it was with feelings of horror and disgust that one Saturday I received a polite note from the head of the house, informing me that I should not be required any more, and enclosing a month's salary in lieu of notice: "We are very sorry to part with you; but our attention has been repeatedly called to the fact of your being professionally engaged in the sporting world."

I went home stupefied. I had never thought of choosing a *nom de circonstance*, and my matches had always been noticed in the papers; but I had never dreamt of this result—almost a death-blow to a man with a wife and two little children.

However, I believed too strongly in my abilities as a foot-racer to be much cast down. I had also a vague, uncertain, and foolish idea of fame in connection with my new pursuit, and was extremely proud of being pointed out and admired whenever I visited a running-ground. The probability of losing never entered into my calculations, and I had forgotten to reckon that the money, which formed an agreeable addendum to a comfortable salary, would be found barely sufficient to pay rent and provide us with bread and butter.

Misfortunes never come alone. Men who had a month before offered to run me level now asked for starts, and the future began to look extremely dreary. My relatives, persons of a genteel and therefore narrow-minded class, had long before voted me an outcast; and dim visions of hungry youngsters, pawnshops, and parish relief began to haunt me.

At last I entered into an engagement with Bob Stevens, a runner who had, before my advent, been regarded as the best Londoner, and agreed to give him two yards in six-score for a stake of £50. Then commenced the task of raising the coin. Difficulties beset me from the outset. One man had an account to pay, another had just settled one, the third had resolved to give up the game, and a fourth told me flatly that he thought I was sure to lose, and that he should stand my opponent. I had, therefore, but one resource left, which was to apply to a professional backer, and obtain his advice and assistance.

I have before stated that I knew little or nothing of these gentry; but I had several times seen, and much oftener heard about, a Mr. Thomas Cost, who managed a running-ground in the suburban east of London. Cost—or Old Tom, as he was generally called—had himself been a performer of some note, but had of late years been content to superintend the movements of his younger brethren; to find them their stake-money, run them their trials, pocket the larger share of the profits when his men won, and arrange matters so as to lose as little as possible when defeat overtook them. So successful had he been in his endeavours, that the mere fact of his taking a man in hand was of immense benefit to the latter; and I knew that if I could say Tom Cost was standing a fiver or tenner with me, I should very easily raise the remainder of the money.

To Cost then I accordingly went, and explained to him exactly how I was situated. He used to live in a little house standing in the midst of the running-ground, and residing with him were several noted "peds," who regarded themselves as very full-sized apples indeed, and who, guessing I had come down to interfere with some of their special prerogatives, submitted me to a half-pitying, half-contemptuous cross-examination, before I was allowed to see their master. The reason for this treatment was, that there is no class for which *bonâ fide* professional athletes have so thorough a contempt as the body to which I then belonged—the half-amateur class, which is neither gentleman nor professional, but a mixture of the two, possessing the worst features of both schools. In justice to Cost's stable, as they collectively called themselves, I must say that I received many kindnesses at their hands when they came to know me better, and when I was admitted among them as one of their kind.

Cost listened to me very patiently, and then expressed his opinions. He said he had seen me run on several occasions, and that he thought I might, by judicious training, be made to travel much faster than I had ever done before.

"I think you can win easily if I take you in hand; and if you like to come down here and train under our system, I'll find as much money as you want."

I told my adviser that I should have no difficulty in getting money if I only had his promise of support, to which he replied, "Very well, say I'm going a tenner with you; but you may as well collect all the pieces you can, and then on the day you can back yourself, or hedge with the overplus."

This seemed at the time rather strange advice, as I had never dreamed of drawing more than sufficient for the usual deposits; but I kept my thoughts to myself, and agreeing to return in a week, for the purpose of getting fit, went back to my own neighbourhood.

I lost no time in informing everybody I knew that Tom Cost was finding me by far the largest share in my "pony," and those who had been most loud in their remarks as to my folly in making the present match at once recanted. Offers of assistance came from all quarters, and on calculating the amount guaranteed, I found that no less than three £25 matches could have been made by me. Of course, the news soon travelled far and wide that Tom Cost had taken Tom Wilson into his charge, and the few evenings which elapsed before my departure were passed in lionizing at various small publics, and in looking with scorn and contempt upon any less fortunate member of the profession across whom I happened to fall.

My friend Biggins, the publican, upon whose shrewdness I have remarked, was, in company with the rest of his party, extremely jubilant, and he lost no opportunity of publicly remarking that he had from the first observed my extraordinary speed. So said all the others. But they were perfectly oblivious of their refusal to back me until Tom Cost took up my cause.

Well, in due time, I arrived at the S——— Grounds, and commenced my preparations. These were not very difficult, as previous engagements had placed me in very good form, and I carried no more superfluous flesh than I could conveniently get off by dint of walking exercise and continual practice at my distance. Blessed with a good constitution, and spurred by emulation and love of footracing, I took rather too much exercise at the outset, and though I felt wonderfully well, ran a decidedly bad trial at the end of my first week's sojourn.

My experienced Mentor, far from feeling discouraged at this—as my clever tutors of olden days would have been—saw in it signs of advantage. He made me totally abstain from running for two days, during which I took nothing but sufficient gentle exercise to prevent my increasing in weight, and then he once more put me "through the mill," the result making him very much surprised, my time being better than either of us had expected it to be.

Regularly my promised remittances arrived, and I soon had a considerable balance in hand. This rather troubled me, and on the first opportunity I asked Cost what was to be done with it. He answered, "Have you made any arrangements for the support of your missus and youngsters whilst you're training? No? I thought not. Then you'd better send a tenner home at once, and I'll mind the remainder."

"But how am I to account for it after the race? I shan't have enough to pay my backers out."

"Well, in the first place you haven't won yet——"

"Haven't won! Why, you said it was a hundred to one on me!"

"Well, so it is—but, there, cut away: you'll find it'll be all right."

The following Saturday was a handicap day at the grounds, and my name was duly entered as scratch man in the race. As I was training for a match, I did not expect to have to run; but at breakfast in the morning Old Tom told me not to do any work till the afternoon, and then to take my practice in the handicap. "And," concluded he, "don't eat too much dinner, for I dare say you'll have to run two or three times."

"What! do you think I can win my first heat?"

"I do, and, what's more, I've backed you to win right out; beside which, I'm making a book, and you'll have to run for me."

Of course, I felt very flattered at this mark of confidence, and anxiously longed for the afternoon. I knew I should be sure of getting away well in each heat, as Old Tom, or a nominee of his, would fire the pistol. But, looking at the list of good names down, to all of which I had to concede more or less start, I could not understand why I was allowed to try, as winning would be sure to expose my best form, and make the match with Stevens a foregone conclusion. And the more I studied the question, the more puzzled I became; but I was very glad to show off, and strutted about the ground with conscious dignity. Among the visitors were many men of my acquaintance and when I told them I was going to run and try, they thought it was sheer madness. "Because," said they, "in the first place, you can't win, and if you do, you won't get a bet on in your race with Bob. Look at the starts you 've got to give Soandso and Whatshisname." And so they sang in concert.

Well, I won my first heat rather easily, although six to four was laid on one man, evens on another, two to one against me, and any price outsiders. This showed I was running well, but still few were found to support me when I was drawn against the favourite in the second round. This man had a long start—eight yards in a hundred and thirty—and the heat seemed to be at his mercy; in fact, he would have taken four yards of me in a match. But I had my orders, and getting away well, gradually overhauled him, got level ten yards from the tape, and won comfortably, to the intense chagrin of the layers of long odds, and the delight of a few who had stood by me. The most dangerous man was now beaten, and the final heat was almost a walk-over. When I had won right out, I was carried round the ground by a band chiefly composed of the old training gang, which I must, for convenience sake, designate Biggins's lot, and they then went away, leaving me to my dreams of future greatness, and more than ever convinced that I was the best man in England.

This was a week before the day set for the race, and during the interval the most extravagant stories were set afloat as to my powers. Those who had been the last to believe in my exceptional ability now magnified it, as if to compensate for previous shortcomings; and betting, from evens taken on Stevens, rose with alarming rapidity to six to one offered on Wilson, without a response. Clever people spoke of the coming contest as "a walk-over," "an exhibition," "a good thing," etc., and nobody ever dreamed that Bob Stevens had got the ghost of a chance.

At last the day arrived, and early in the morning Old Tom came to my bed-side and, having woke me, said, without any introduction,

"You 'll have to lose this race, Tom Wilson."

I thought he was joking, and laughed; but he assured me that he meant what he said, and then speechless indignation seized me for its own. During my silence he continued,

"Do you mean to tell me that you didn't understand the game I was playing? What do you think I let you win that paltry five-pound handicap for? Why, here 's a fortune to be got all at once, so don't be a fool. Everybody will be mad to lay five to one on you. If you win you 'll have fifty pounds to draw, and more than a hundred to pay, for you mustn't forget the over money will have to be paid as though it was in the stakes, whereas, I 'll give you two hundred pounds *now* to stop behind, and another two hundred when the race is over, besides the money I 've got of yours (thirty pounds). You can then come and live here altogether, and, running with judgment, will in a couple of years get a lot of money. In the meantime, your wife can go into a little business with some of what we get to-day. So don't be stupid. Here 's the two hundred and thirty 'jemmy,' and there 'll be another hundred to-night."

Great as was the temptation, I was honest—or idiotic—enough to resist, and read him a severe lesson on his perfidy. After a stormy scene, we parted, but I shall never forget his final remark:

"Well, have your own way; but you 're sure to be licked on your merits some day, and then see how your pals will serve you—them as you 're too proud to do now."

In the afternoon my friends began to arrive rapidly: Old Tom had recovered his serenity, and I felt very happy. I had never been beaten, and the idea of loss never disturbed my serenity. Still, I was half inclined to assent to Tom's proposition; but I shook off the fancy, and went out and watched the arrival of Stevens and his friends. I was rather interested in the movements of a strange individual, who, mounted on a stool, was excitedly expressing his intention of taking odds, and who having accepted all the fives he could get, was now satisfied with fours. Little I thought who placed him there, and just as little guessed that I was to be the victim of as cruel a swindle as ever was perpetrated.

The time arrived at which we were to be on the scratch, and having ascertained that Stevens was ready, I was soon out of my clothes. Our articles of agreement stipulated that we were to start by mutual consent, but that if we failed to get off in fifteen minutes the pistol was to be brought into requisition. Just as I was about to leave the room in which we usually stripped, Tom said,

"I shall attend upon you myself; but one thing I must impress upon you: don't go by mutual consent. There seems to be a disposition to back Stevens, based upon a supposition which has got wind that you have listened to reason! If you stand on the mark as if you don't know what to do, and run off when there's no chance of his going, suspicion will be aroused, because you could let him go and catch him easily; the betting will come to evens, and I have sent out your thirty pounds to be put on. We shall then get very nearly as much as if you had done what I asked you."

I readily agreed, glad to please Tom in any way I could with a due regard to honour, and stood on the mark for a quarter of an hour, to the surprise of my friends, who, however, backed me with all their money. Just as the starter walked up the course pistol in hand, I heard the strange man sing out, "Six to four on Stanford." Feeling astonished, I turned to Tom, who said,

"It's all right; they think they know something. You'll mow him down easily. Here, take a swig."

My mouth was parched with the excitement of the moment, I took the bottle and drank unthinkingly. As I threw off my rug and got on the mark, a horrible sickening sensation seized me. I felt blind and confused, and reeled as I stood; but long before I could analyse my feelings I heard the pistol crack, and started instinctively after my opponent. I can remember struggling madly, and feeling as though my feet were made of lead—I never shall forget it! Still, in spite of the strong dose I had just taken, I got quite close to Bob; but the effort settled me, and I was just beaten on the post. As the tape was passed I fell down in a dead faint.

When I came to I was almost alone—my quondam friends had departed, swearing bitterly that I had sold them—and Old Tom was holding a glass of something to my lips. I staggered off the couch (I had been carried indoors) and expressed my determination to depart forthwith. No objection was made to this, and I, the conqueror in twenty matches, staggered home alone, with temples throbbing and heart bursting, weary, footsore, and penniless.

Biggins and Co. turned their backs upon me, of course; Old Tom laughed contemptuously, and it was a very long time before I got another start, during which I suffered greatly. When the story became public, which to a certain extent it soon did, I received no pity: the very persons I had striven to serve said I was a fool to refuse so good a chance, and when I asked them to make me up a stake (for I could now get on lots of easy matches, being a beaten man), scoffingly refused, and I had to wait my turn and climb up again the best way I could.

But this bit of training—for training in the strictest meaning of the word it was above all other kinds, and to it I owe my present position, as well as many a success in days gone by—eventually did me a great deal of good. It showed me how Quixotic it is for for one man to attempt upsetting a recognized institution, and how certain the effort is to result in failure. When my opportunity came, I availed myself of it: played the game I had formerly scorned, turned the tables on Old Tom, paid out Biggins's lot, and am a living instance of the adage that "there is no sharp like a converted flat."

Still, it was a long time before I did get set up again, and during the time of my defeat by Bob and my fresh start I was pretty familiar with poverty. I often shiver now when I wake up suddenly and am not sure if I am as I am now, or as I was once. But the day came at last, and though I had many ups and downs before I found the balance permanently inclining to the comfortable side of things, I never suffered again through trying too hard to benefit other people. Believe me, the man who makes most enemies and has most trouble in this world is the one who is always in a hurry to oblige people. And I have had some hard experiences at many things besides pedestrianism. Yet although the story I have just told you is comparatively unimportant, my mind always dwells on it, and if I were to live for a million years, I should never forget my first hard lesson in the ways of the sporting world.

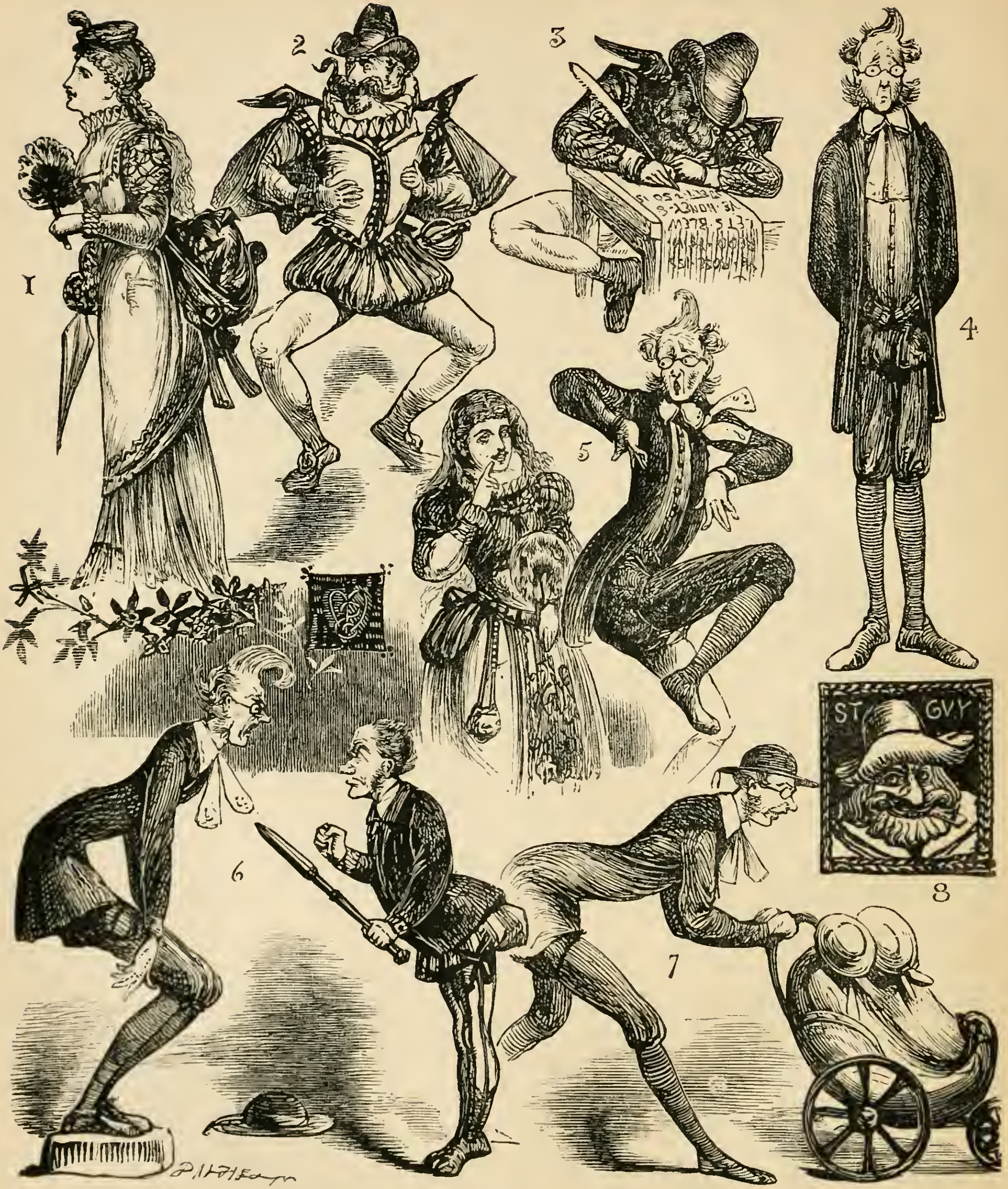
JOSEPH MANTON.

"BILZVORD JISTIS."

"Aw massy, zoce! gude lawks, how b' ee?
Est yurd tha nuze tu-day?"
"No, Gracey, no! Hot ez et, cheel?"
"About owld Jerry Gay."
"Jest mak a putch, an lit es yer
Hot tez—tha hozebird—wull,
Ez allez zed he 'd niver kum
Tu eny gude, mazel.
Od, drat 'n! he 'th bin pawchin, Grace,
Or zummat, I 'll be bound!
Tha lops—he 's zartin tu ba hung:
His lik wur niver vownd."
"No, Mally, et ez wez than thet."
"'Nan?" "Zumthin wez, I zay!"
"Hot wez than pawchin, Gracey?" "Ees,
A gurt dale wez ees vay.
I 'll tul tha al abowt et, dame.
Yu naw tha narra drang?
Wull, es ed jist bin up, d' ye zee?
Tu spayk way Hurchy Crang;
An wen es kum hout, Mall, agen,
Tha hair wur lik a vilm.
'Hot iver be min bowt?' zez I;
'Tha rawd ez vule o' pilm!'
'T wor zetch a sture; es niver zeed
Tha hoi rawd zo avor—
Tha zame ez ef owld Coddon Hill
Wur tor up mule an mor.
An hot de theenk 'twor al abowt?—
Tez tru, ez I 'm alive!—
Thay wur a-shakin Jerry, Mall,
Vor batin ov ez wive.
Tu du tha theeng al viddevide,
Thay gort a blanket, dame,
An in thay shuv'd 'n, nek an crop,
An mad 'en ot ez vlame!
Ees, there wos Jenny Mashall vust;
Nex Zuke an Nanny May;
Then Honor Brooks an Dolly Prist,
An strappin Becky Day—
An Varmer Zluman, he wur thare!"
"An taylor Jans, I wadge!"
"An Kit tha cobler, and tha clark,
Tha smith tu, Josha Madge.
Pore Jerry! es shel scat ma zides
Tu tel ee al tha vun!—
Thare he wur, tumlin upzedown—
Tha yowlin zen-ov-a-gun.
'Aw, du ee stap, an let ma go!'
Ha kald hout, wen a bump;
An up a went agen sky-hoi,
Wance more tu kum down *vlump!*
'Yu meslin ov a brute! dest yur
Weth tha hang-galluz lukes?—
West iver zarve er zo agen?—
Spayk hout!' zezs Honor Brooks;
'Quick, in a minnet,' Honor zeth,
'Or up yu go agen!'
'NO, NIVER, NIVER, NIVER MORE!'
Zeys Jerry, zore with pain.
An zo thay let 'n hout, when lor,
Mall, zitch a zite wur zeed!—
Ha lik a dug a tail-pipe'd urnd,
Or vox et vule-kry speed.
Es laff'd tu zee Bet Zlitterpuche,
An thet gurt slammik, Zal,
Gie chace, an by tha scruf o' th' nek,
Jist shake tha skarecraw, Mall.
An lor! ee shude a zeed tha pegs
A por go wildago!
An Kitty Cole's owld dunkey Jack,
'Way divil-glintin Joe.
On went the skerémouch beheend
Down Ruckaburrow Hill,
Till Jerry went tu hid-a'-peep
Zumwhare ba Matha's Mill!
I 'll wadge a hunderd ginneys, dame,
He 'll net vorgit th' day!—
Now, es mus wish ee wull; tez time
Thet es wur on ma way."

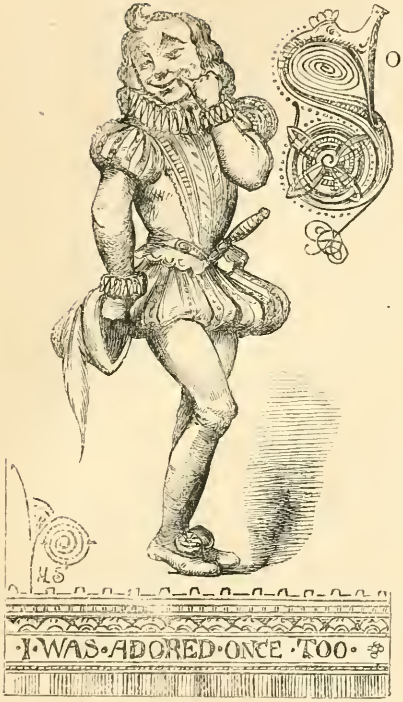
EDWARD CAPERN.

A LEGEND OF PARSON'S GREEN.



1. In the year 1603 Gloriana Sweetchin was the pride of the parish. 2. When Guido de Vaux saw her and loved her to disterraction! 3. So he wrote her a valentine so lofty in style, 4. That Gloriana set it down to the eloquent young parson. 5. She accordingly smiled on *him* till he felt very uncomfortable. 6. And then she set on her pa to remonstrate on the way the parson was trifling with her best affections. 7. And some time after, this green young parson might be seen wheeling Gloriana's perambulator, and the place where this happened is called Parson's Green to this day. 8. As for Guido de Vaux, overcome by remorse at his being the unconscious instrument of driving an innocent girl into holy matrimony, he joined the Gunpowder Plot, and was canonized under the title of Guy Fawkes. His festival takes place in November.

O. B. C. T.'S SIGHS.



So you're to marry Marianne—
The "soft impeachment" own!
In choosing such a slim young man
Her wit she has not shown,
Since if a husband's good at all,
And not a simple fetter,
She *should* take one that's fat, not small,—
"The more of good the better!"
I see the twinkle in your eyes,
As my huge bulk you view;
Well, ere my size provoked my sighs
I was adored once, too!

Yet will I not, though vast as vat,
Be to a butt disgraced!
A sad fatality is fat,
Through which I ran to waste—
That is, the "waist" that meets the "i,"
And rather loses "ease"—
"E" in the plural you espy,—
So giggle, if you please!
"Laugh and grow fat!" as proverbs tell,
And truly, Slender, *you*
Must somewhat swell ere you're a swell,—
Adored as I was, too!

Though Double X-tra stout just now,
I'm 'ale beyond debate—
I should say "hale," would fat allow
A man to aspirate.
You caper—you are fond of hops,—
Ah, well! you're pale and bitter
Yet as a pole, the bine that props,
Were your vocation fitter.
You laugh, and answer Cooper might
For my requirements do;
Or Hoop-de-doo! Go on! All right!
I was adored once, too!

You fill a woman's heart? Absurd!
If she says that, she wheedles.
In that red flannel leaf you're third,
Perhaps, of twenty needles!
You're one in all the needle-case,
Though pointed, bright, and nimble;
But I must have one special place,
Rotund as any thimble.
Ah, well! it's needless thus to pant:
To such bright dreams adieu;
Into a dew resolve I can't,
Although adored once, too!

O. B. C. T.

THE SABOTS OF MÈRE TRINETTE.

SHE was one of those people who are born before their time, was Mère Trinette—one of those large aspiring souls who can't fit their great aspirations into their small space; in short, who cannot cram their quart into a pint. She had developed her large mind into a very large body. She was a Norman, and these Norman men and women generally bear the likeness of the great greedy man commonly called the "Conqueror," who, having munched up all the sour bread he could in his own country, came over here and gobbled up our great sweet English loaf at one mouthful. French men and women are generally short, thin, and bright, and when provoked can be as fierce and dangerous as the slender, keen flashes of lightning; while their northerly brethren are as the heavy thunder-roll that succeeds—slow, ponderous, and harmless.

The ancient wilful temperament has survived the fall of many a castle and tower, and that royal old lady, Anne of Brittany, has left her self-willed motto not alone carved on her castle at St. Malo, "*Qui qu'en grogne, ainsi sera, c'est mon plaisir!*" or in the many streets called "*Rue qui qu'en grogne*" in little French towns, but in the stubborn self-wills and obstinate minds of her countrymen and, more notably still, of her countrywomen. Don't they all love their own country, their own *cuisine*, their own *fêtes*, and, alas! more feebly, their own costumes, always their own "*plaisir*" in everything?

And now to return to Mère Trinette. She lived in a little fishing town on the northern coast of France, called Bellecôte—a pretty, primitive place. In that happy little Arcadia the fortunate inhabitants have neither the educated eyes, noses, or ears that belong to the refined disease called civilization. So the "seventy-seven smells" were ignored, the heaps of every abomination under the sun before every one's door, and the cracking of whips and ingling of bells unnoticed.

In this little Paradise had lived all her life Mère Trinette—a true follower of Duchess Anne, although she had known a good deal of sorrow, this poor old woman. She was the only child of the old man who owned the shop where wooden shoes or *sabots* were made and sold. Her parents were comfortably off, according to their meek ideas, and were dreadfully put out when Trinette—then a blooming young woman of twenty—asserted *her* right to "*mon plaisir*," and would marry a very handsome young fisherman. Her father and mother loved dry land best, and said she would reap a sorry harvest from the sea, as poor Trinette did, for one day a *Terre Neuvier* went off cod-fishing to St. Pierre de Miquelon, and carried off, with her other freight of precious human lives, poor Trinette's Jacques. She had taken leave of him, as others had done, at the foot of the great crucifix on the *jetée*, and there she knelt, with her babe in her arms, many a time and oft, praying for his safe return. But it was a bad season, and rough weather had prevailed, and that boat at least never returned. After the first great wave of sorrow had rushed over her and left her desolate, Trinette plucked up her courage, and centred all her hopes on her son. Her old parents died within a short time of each other, and when their possessions were sold, she found herself with a bare subsistence. But she had never feared work, and took everything that came to hand, and brought up her boy very well. But when the lad grew up, to her grief (for Trinette was wiser now, and hated everything connected with the sea), Etienne declared he would be a sailor like his father. In spite of all her arguments and warnings, he had his "*plaisir*," and got on very well, till he, too, like his father, married early. To his mother's disgust, he chose a young dressmaker—a delicate little woman, who had no portion, and was not able to work hard to gain any; and before long the old sorrow repeated itself—a stormy night, and a wrecked fishing-boat, and Trinette had nothing left of her son but the drooping widow and her frail little girl-baby. But Trinette's brave spirit was not easily quenched, and so she devoted herself in her old age to these last relics of her dear one. The young widow did not long trouble any one, for within the year she had faded out of existence altogether. Then Mère Trinette turned to, and took up the vocation which is the best fulfilled of all by Frenchwomen—the grandmother's. She devoted herself tenderly to the forlorn little babe, and nursed it up so carefully that at last it developed into a fine blooming child of twelve. And now Mère Trinette was about to reap the reward of her labours, for little Marie Angélique was preparing for her first Communion, and had acquitted herself well, and won honour and praise, not only from the good Sœurs, but from M. le Curé himself. On the day of the *Fête Dieu*, there was to be the usual procession to the great crucifix on the *jetée*, and the little white-robed maidens, with their friends, were to form part of it. Many a weary journey had Mère Trinette taken to the foot of that cross—many a sorrowful prayer uttered there for the dear ones who had been taken from her; but this time was to be a more happy visit. Now that Marie Angélique had proved herself to be the most modest and best conducted little damsel in Bellecôte, her proud old grandmother could find no room in her heart for anything but rejoicing.

Now, among Mère Trinette's little peculiarities—her "*plaisirs*"—one was very strongly marked, and had formed the subject of endless controversies between her and her neighbours. She had a very large foot naturally, and nothing would satisfy her but to adorn it always with the largest and heaviest *sabots* she could find. Now, even the smallest and neatest kinds of wooden foot-gear are but heavy and clumsy affairs at best, and therefore in exaggerated proportions they are truly inconvenient. It has always appeared to me from my childhood, that a relative of mine discovered the best use for them when he purloined one belonging to our old *bonne*, and adding a wooden skewer for mast and a sheet of paper for sail, launched it in the family wash-tub!

This opinion, however, I should not have dared to express to Mère Trinette, for she would have considered it a downright sacrilege.

No, she would not wear the very best leather that ever was tanned: wood she had worn all her life, and wood she would wear to her death. In vain her friends told her that it was all very well to use her *sabots* on ordinary occasions, but that she ought to had have a pair of proper shoes for the *fête*. No! she bought Marie Angélique a charming little pair of white boots, and with her white muslin dress and veil she would look like the little angel she was. But for herself—was she not going that very hour to Clément Bruat, who had bought the stock and goodwill of her dear old father? True he had wished for her as well as the *sabots*. *Mais!* what would you have? She had preferred her Jacques, and had not Clément married Veuve Labbé? and a very good wife she had made him. And Clément was a good workman in his way.

However, a new pair of *sabots* she must have for the *fête*, and off she went to her old home to choose the required shoes. But Monsieur Clément, who took a spiteful pleasure in tormenting his old flame, as usual, raised difficulties. He had not a pair big enough in all his shop. People did not wear such clumsy old things as they used to do. But he had some excellent articles in leather with wooden soles—much neater, and not so heavy. Would Madame try a pair?

No! Madame would not: *sabots* she wanted, and *sabots* she must have, and he must make her a pair on purpose, and in time for the *fête*. But it was impossible! He could not get such a pair done for Madame before the end of ten days. Madame should have bespoken them before.

Poor Mère Trinette was in dreadful trouble, but those leather abominations she could *not* endure. So she employed all her arts of persuasion, and at last departed, a happy woman, with Monsieur Clément's solemn promise that she should have her *sabots* on the eve of the *fête*.

Relieved in her mind on this important subject, and having already carefully arranged little Marie's toilette, she took stock of her own wardrobe. Yes, there was her best blue skirt, almost as good as new, which would go nicely with her brown serge jacket, and, with her new orange handkerchief and clean cap, she would be quite *comme il faut!*

The day dawned bright and beautiful, and Bellecôte was busy all the morning, getting ready for the procession. The fishing-boats decked themselves in their new flags; the altar was raised in the market-place, and decorated by the combined efforts of the inhabitants: Monsieur Hautot, the ironmonger, brought a couple of smart candlesticks, and Madame Blot, the milliner, carried out the pretty rustic *jardinière* that filled the middle of her window between the bonnets, and Mademoiselle Clairette filled it with the pots of flowers from the window of her little *café*. And now from every street came thronging to the grey old church the little white-robed maidens, who, with the long veils falling to their feet, looked like fairy brides. By-and-bye out came the priests and the placid, kind Sœurs, and began to marshal the procession, with its banners and garlands. First came a detachment of the soldiers from the garrison, each man carrying a little nosegay of flowers in the top of his rifle (ah, if they never bore more dangerous missiles, the world would be a great deal better and wiser!) and the captain with a huge bouquet in his hand, with which he did not seem quite to know what to do. After them came the rows of little white damsels, then the priests in their robes, and the chorister boys in scarlet and white lace.

Before they came to the crucifix the chant of praise broke out, and Mère Trinette, with her big heart full of thanksgiving, and her head high in triumph, marched along, singing out lustily. For once her big feet were out of her mind, and, left to their own devices, they betrayed her; for an unlucky big pebble lay exactly in her path, and caught in the clumsy heel of her huge new *sabot!* Down went Mère Trinette flat on her nose; and oh, horror! thanks to a curve in the path, down over her went half a dozen little white girls; over them half the singing children of the choir. It was just like a pack of cards: down went the first, the second, and so on, winding up with the bearer of the big banner, who slipped, scrambled, vainly attempted to maintain his dignity, but finally fell atop of the pile! To describe the general consternation would be impossible; however, with some difficulty all were safely picked up, and order restored to the scattered ranks, while all joined in denouncing the unfortunate cause of the disaster. Poor Mère Trinette, bruised and dusty, endured all the railings patiently enough; until M. the Curé himself came up and said in his hard dry voice,

"Mère Trinette, I am shocked at you—quite scandalized. You must take more heed to your ways: remember the example to the young people. Mère Trinette, take more care of your steps!"

Poor Mére Trinette! she was actually crying bitterly now; for shocked as she had been at being the cause of such an upset, and vexed as she felt at the reproaches of her neighbours, the rebuke—open and public—of M. the Curé, cut her to the heart. She shrank back from the procession, taking refuge among the mob behind.

"I told you, Mère Trinette, you would suffer for your big *sabots*," said one. "*Ciel!* to think of upsetting the procession," said another. "And throwing St. André's banner in the dust," added a third.

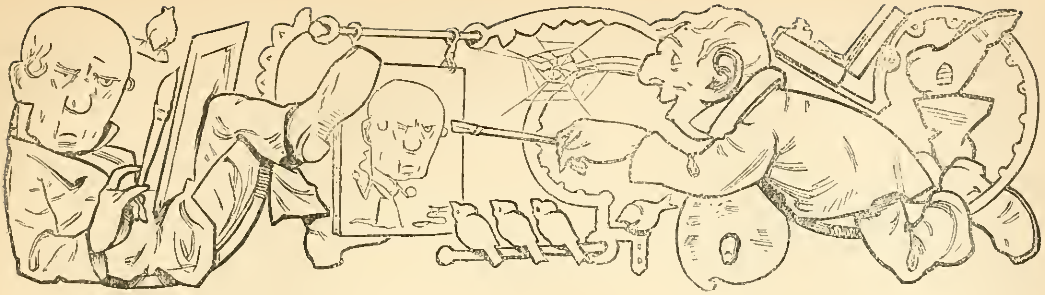
Mère Trinette could stand it no longer, so she made her way on, and ensconced herself behind some tall shrubs that were close to the crucifix. The service over, the procession re-formed to return, when, by a curious fatality, in descending the wide stone steps which led to the crucifix, M. le Curé stumbled, and down he went on his knees, fortunately involving no one else in his fall.

I shame to narrate it, and I blush for her—but that irrepressible Mère Trinette rushed from her ambush, and carefully picking up M. le Curé, who was a short thin man, set him on his legs again; and before he got over his discomfiture, exclaimed,

"Oh, M. le Curé, to think of your following my example! but it's all owing to these miserable pebbles—but you must mind your steps, M. le Curé—mind your steps!"

Mère Trinette went home a happy woman once more; it is true, M le Curé laid a long and heavy penance upon her for her manifold offences, but she did not mind. She considered she had got much the best of it, and she was never twitted any more, and wore her big *sabots* in peace to the end of her days.

F. F. Broderip.



A PAINTER'S VENGEANCE.

I'M painting, by the curling brook,
A cottage, with vermilion bricks:
It's not a bad production—look!
A ninety-nine by sixty-six.
My firmament is brightly blue;
The foliage is dazzling too.

Another artist works below,
But he is very cross and grim;
I think he snubs me, don't you know?
And so I never speak to him.
He's dotted all the landscape down
In hideously dirty brown.

I paint as brightly as I can,
My heart and dress alike are gay;
But he's a dismal sort of man,
And wears a coat of dingy grey
This doleful picture may be fine,
But is it half as green as mine?

The peasants love my lively scenes,
And nod, and smile, and scratch their heads;
And some of them admire the greens,
While some of them prefer the reds.
They eye *his* subject, brown and grey,
And grin, and wink, and walk away.

And then he's always painting *me*,
Behind a cart, or in a boat,
Or on a gate, or up a tree,
Because I wear a scarlet coat.
Although, of course, it *may* not be,
I'm somehow sure it's meant for me.

He puts me, as a scarlet spot,
Against a field of dingy drab;
But, big or little, I'm a blot—
A stupid, shapeless, scarlet dab!
No studied shapelessness prevents
My knowing whom it represents!

But I've a method, which combines
Both profit and revenge's feast;
I've painted *him* on twenty signs
For twenty roadside inns, at least.
I know his features now by rote—
I put *him* in a scarlet coat.

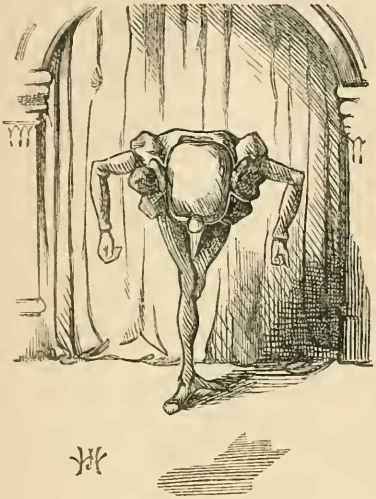
The fairy scenes I touch and trim,
The rosy skies and azure springs,
Are merely backgrounds meant for *him*—
Entirely secondary things.
The last was meant for Doctor Watts,
And this for Mary Queen o' Scots.

He's George the Fourth, and Charles the First
And lately, to its inmost roots,
My very system's been athirst
To paint him as the "Goat in Boots."
But there I fear my aim would fail—
They wouldn't know him with a tail.

He'll hang me, if he has a mind,
On ev'ry exhibition wall,
And I shall leave his face behind
At ev'ry hostel where we call:
And when again he comes this way
He'll be astonished, I should say!

JAMES S. SULLIVAN.

A SKETCH FOR AN OPERETTA.



THE other day my esteemed friend, Wuffles, the composer of several comic songs that have immortalized many a music-hall star, was seized with a desire to write an operetta. None of your *opéra bouffe*, or even *opéra comique*, for him. He wanted a genuine piece of sentiment. It was vain to point out that there was no theatre playing operetta. He would create one! It was useless to urge that comic music had been his forte, and he had never written anything sentimental. He possessed the genuine art! There was nothing for it but to consent; and, accordingly, I sat down and cudgelled my brains for a plot, and the way to carry it out.

Insensibly I fell in with Wuffles's spirit—in other words, with his quaint face ever before me, I so far identified myself with him, that I unconsciously blended the comic with the serious in the most ludicrous—but, as it appeared to me at the time, quite reasonable—manner. Here is the result:

The Republic of Mudclodcumclania.

Dramatis Personæ.

Don Jones	*A Traveller.*
Gilesini	*A Ploughboy.*
Don Scroggs	*A Malcontent.*
Grandee Grumph	*A wealthy Farmer.*
Senorina Peggy	Grumph's *Daughter.*
Senora Potts	*Landlady of* "The Chequers."
Donna Scroggs	*A Malcontentess.*

La Polizia, Dons Grimes, Smugger, Hodgini, &c., *and* Donnas Grimes, Patty, Sooky, Madge, &c.

The scene was to open on the village green at fair-time. (Dance.) In spite of an outward show of jollity, there was to be hidden discontent. (Chorus of Conspirators.) Enter Jones, who, beholding the festivities, sang a song about—"These peaceful glades, so calm and still, 'Mid low of kine and chant of lark, Where he who'd chance to rob a till, Would find it easy to keep dark." He would then proceed to make mad love to Peggy, much to the disgust of Gilesini. Then would come Scroggs, who is threatened by Grumph with a prosecution for poaching. Finding this complaint does not rouse the people—(Note: three or four would do)—he assures them Grumph means to lower wages and raise rents. An outbreak. (Chorus of indignant peasantry.) Jones fosters a rebellion, and advises the issuing of the Proclamation of a Republic! As he is the only person who can write, he is chosen Dictator, and makes the reluctant Peggy the Dictatress. Gilesini declares (aside, in a loud song) his intention of concealing Grumph in the pigstye, and departs to do so, while Jones writes the Proclamation, which is duly posted. Gilesini returns, and discovers that Republic is spelt with two "p's." Jones makes him Minister of Education, and Senora Potts Chancelloress of the 'Chequer. In the meantime Grumph has observed La Polizia—(this sounds better than Rural Constable Wallop)—making love to Donna Patty, and calls him. They proceed to the scene of the insurrection, where the exultant labourers have raised a triumphal Arch. (March.) The Dictatress strongly objects to the proposal of her marriage to the Dictator. Senora Potts protests against the announced throwing-open of the Chequers, free to all who give in their adherence. (Duet and trio.) The Dictator, in consideration of the supply of ale, is supported by the people

—(Bacchanal chorus. Query: Why not introduce a hiccup chorus? It 's new)—and prepare garlands for the wedding. (A pastoral song.) At this moment Grumph and La Polizia come on the scene. (The latter, of course, has an Aria to himself.) The Dictator turns pale, as Wallop, after sternly regarding him, takes out a large poster and reads from it—(recitativo)—a description of an absconding shopman, who has robbed his employer. The constable slips on the handcu—manacles. Grumph bestows his daughter on Gilesini, and denounces Don Scroggs as a poacher and "huomo di étiquetti di levi," who has invented the grossest falsehoods.—Universal satisfaction. (Chorus. Wedding March. Dance.)

Will you believe it? Wuffles declares I was making fun of him, and has never spoken to me since. This comes of being sympathetic!

MATTHEW WALKER.

PRIDE PUNISHED.

AGRIGENTUM 's a city in Sicily's isle,
And there a philosopher dwelt;
But we 'll make the philosopher wait for awhile,
Till the name of the city is spelt.
With an A, G, "ag," for Ag—and an R, I, G, for Agr*ig*—
E, N, T, U, M, for Ag-rig-en-tum, as any good boy would twig.

Now, Empedocles, that was the name of the sage,
Who lived in that city, they tell;
He flourished of course in a far-remote age,
And his name in this manner we spell:
With an E, M, "em," for Em—P, E, D, O, Empe*do*—
C, L, E, S, for Em-ped-o-cles, as every good boy will know.

In a school as a learned professor he taught;
As chiropodist practised as well,
Which, meaning a corn-cutter, surely we ought
To teach you in Greek how to spell.
With a C, H, I, for a chi—with an R, O, P, for chi*rop*—
O, D, I, S, T, for chi-rop-o-dist, as a good boy knows, first chop!

But this sage was immensely conceited beside,
And that was the way that he fell:
A prey to Superbia, Goddess of Pride,
Whose name, please, permit me to spell.
With an S, U, "su," for a Su—and a P, E, R, for Su*per*—
And a B, I, A, for Su-per-bi-a, about that no boy will err.

In the County Court he had been pressed by the [suit
Of one, who did *crepidas* sell.
Now, *crepida* 's Latin for slipper or boot,
And the word in this way we should spell:
With a C, R, E, for a cre—and a P, I, "pi," for cre*pi*—
And a D, A, "da," for a cre-pi-da, as a good boy would reply.

So, full of despairing, this silly old elf,
To appear an immortalized swell,
Into Ætna Mons went and projected himself;
And the mountain we 'll properly spell.
With A, E, (diphthong) T, for Æt—and an N, A, "na," for Æt*na*—
And M, O, N, S, for Æt-na-Mons, as any good boy would say.

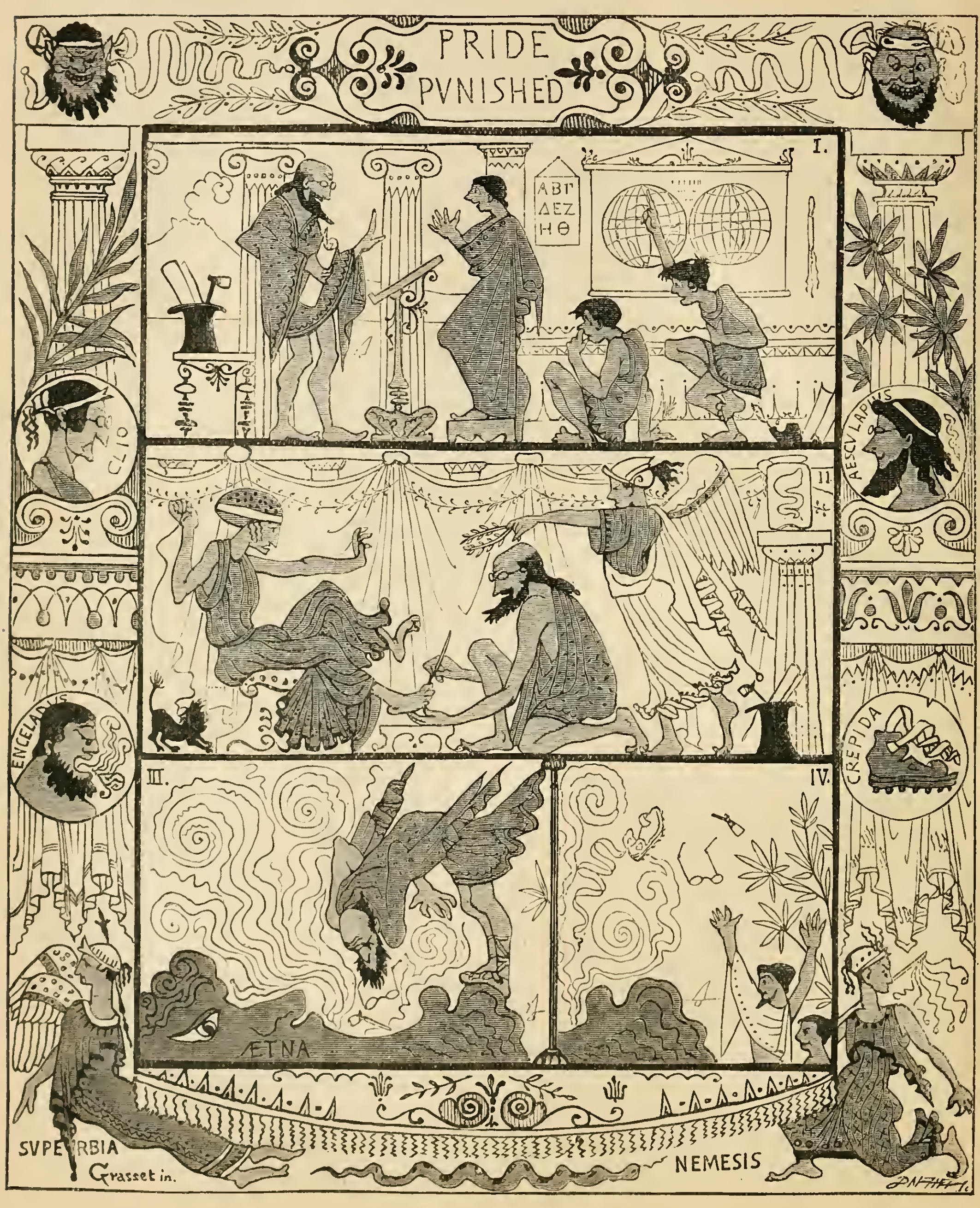
Now, by Jove was the Titan, Enceladus, thrown
In that mountain's hot sulphurous cell,
And the name of the giant, to ancients as known,
We ought in this manner to spell:
With an E, N, "en," for En—and a C, E, L, for En*cel*—
A, D, U, S, for En-cel-a-dus, as every good boy can tell.

The giant's digestion was greatly displeased
With the boots, and began to rebel,
And so of dyspepsia quickly was eased—
A word which 't is proper to spell.
With a D, Y, S, for a dys—and a P, E, P, for dys*pep*—
And an S, I, A, for dys-pep-si-a, and a good boy 'll take that step.

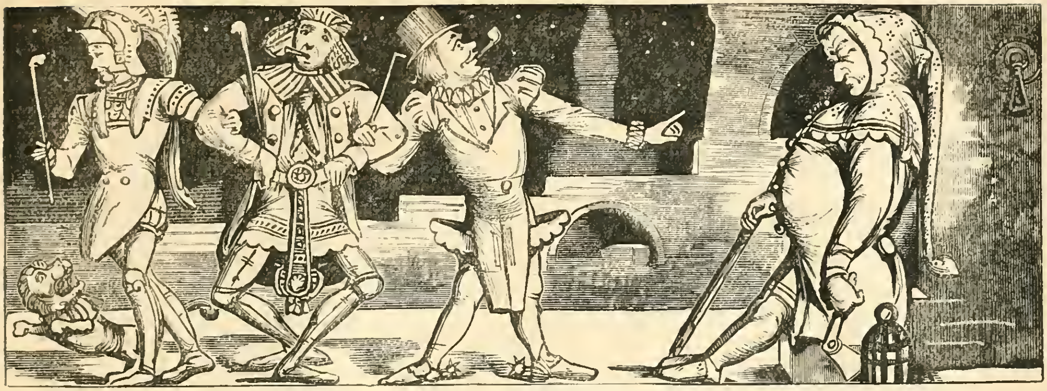
So no more to the sage, when his ragged old boot
Shot out of the mount like a shell,
Immortality Sicily wished to impute—
So the name of the isle we will spell.
Which S, I, "si," and C, I, Si*ci*, and L, Y, Sici*ly*—
And it sounds like "silly lie,"
Which, for one, most surely I
Call the proper way to spell the dodge that that vain sage did try.

T. HOOD.

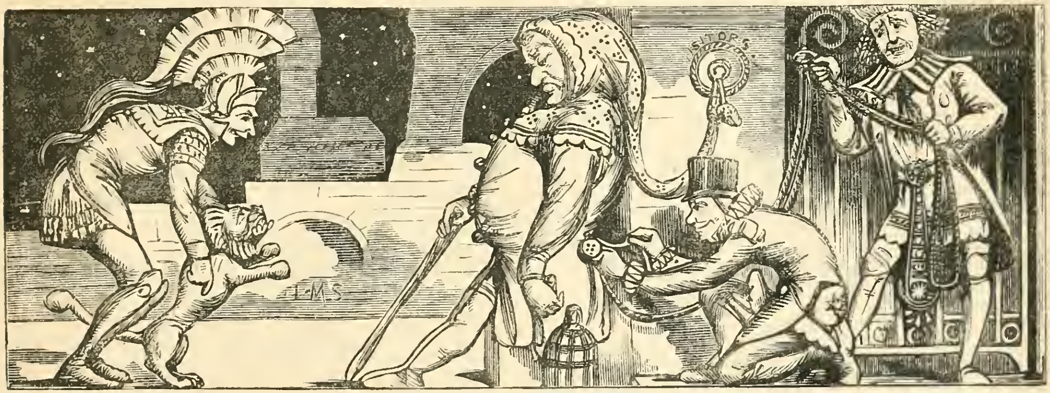
PRIDE PUNISHED.


PRIDE
PVNISHED
I.
ΑΒΓ
ΔΕΖ
ΗΘ
II.
CLIO
AESCVLAPIVS
ENCELADVS
CREPIDA
III.
IV.
ÆTNA
SVPERBIA
Grasset in.
NEMESIS

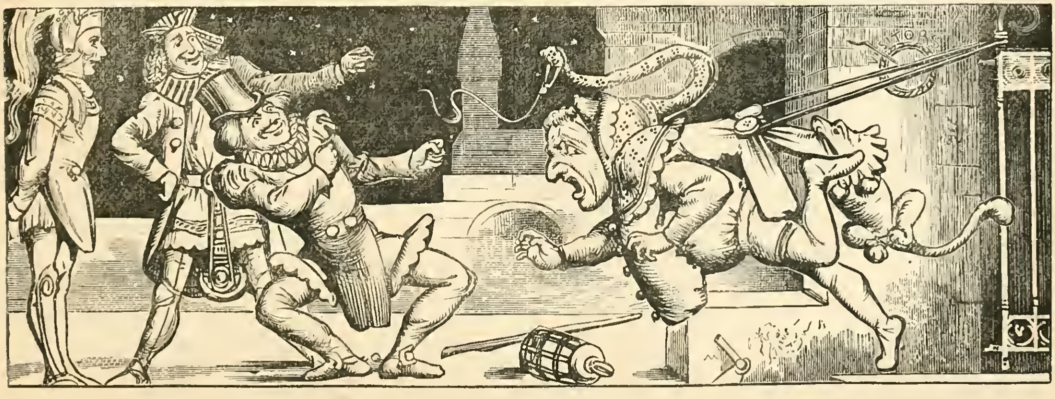
THE STUDENTS AND THE SLUMBERER.



"His eyes were closed,
And, gently snoring, deep he dozed."



"Bound that most unhappy man
To gate and eke to bell."



"Come on, you ruffian, come!
I'm Justice of the Peace!'

THE STUDENTS AND THE SLUMBERER.

“TWAS in the days when gilded youth
(The good times long ago)
Remarked “I’fackins!” or “In sooth!”
“Ay, marry!” or “Gadso!”
About, in short, the period when
Men would remark, on meeting men,
Not “Well, how are you?” but “Good den!”
With other curious speeches
The novel writer teaches.

’T was at this period, I repeat,
Three students learned in law,
At midnight coming down the street,
A drowsy watchman saw;
Beside a doorway he reposed,
His mouth was ope, his eyes were closed,
And, gently snoring, deep he dozed,
Nor did on child or man turn
The lustre of his lantern.

These youths, although they studied law,
I deeply grieve to add,
For it small reverence and awe,
In practice, ever had.
Sir Gypes McWhiskey ate his dinner,
A member of the Temple (Inner).
Lord Tom O’Gynne, the second sinner,
Made Lincoln’s Inn a blaze in;
Jack Rhumm was bound at Gray’s Inn.

“I’fackins!” cried the gay Jack Rhumm,
And added also “Zooks!
Behold a watchman, springalds! Come
And let’s improve his looks.
To yonder bell let’s tie his hood—
His buttons to the gateway.” “Good!’
Exclaimed his friends, who understood
The plan he meant to settle,
Like gallant lads of mettle.

So these fair sirs at once began
With rope and hood as well,
And bound that most unhappy man
To gate, and eke to bell.
Meanwhile doth bold Sir Gypes chi-hike
His favourite dog, yclepen Tyke
(The brute did watchmen much mislike),
Upon his prey to hurry,
And harry him and worry!

So when the laughing Lord O’Gynne
Had tied him to the rail,
And Jack had to the tirling-pin
Attached his hood’s long tail,
Sir Giles did of his dog let go,
And cried, “The hunt’s up!” and “Toho!”
With other terms the sportive know,
To cheer the yelping pack on,
And hasten their attack on!

The dog upon his victim flew,
And bit him in the calf;
The watchman woke with loud to-do,
The youths began to laugh;
For lo! the hood tore down the bell;
The man sprang forward with a yell;
Caught by the rope, he tripped and fell;
And while the bell loud jangled,
The dog at coat-tail dangled!

Meantime the ready-witted Rhumm,
Their laughter to increase,
Cried out, “Come on, you ruffian, come!
I’m Justice of the Peace,
Which me to punish you compels,
For hanging at the gates of swells,
And breaking down their front-door bells!
Come *on*, for you won’t find you
Will get *off*, varlet, mind you!”

MORAL.

In ancient or in modern day,
Youth will be youth, and have its play.

H.

AUTUMN PRIMROSE.

I.

THERE was once a poet who studied politics, and read the police and criminal reports in the newspapers, till he went stark staring mad, which did not take long. The consequence was that he went out by the train for a day's holiday, in the excursion season. It was a rather out-of-the-way place that he went to, because he liked to be quiet; and when he asked for his ticket at the railway station, none of the clerks knew the fare, and a ticket had to be written out for him special. This took so long that he nearly lost his train, but he did catch it, and got to the end of his journey without meeting any accident, or seeing or hearing of any. All the people in the train thought he must be mad to get out at such a station as that, and several passengers in the first, second, and third class carriages, said, all in a breath,

"What can a respectable-looking man like that want with a hole like this? He must be stark, staring mad!"

This remark was, as we know, quite correct; but they little knew what it was that had driven him out of his senses.

The rest of the passengers all went on to a town at the sea-side, which was as full of people as the bottom of a sieve is of air-holes, and they enjoyed themselves very much. The mad poet was soon lost to the eyes of the travellers in the train, for he plunged into a thicket as soon as ever he could, and went burrowing about among the trees like a guinea-pig. All of a sudden he came upon a sight which, as it was the end of September, very much surprised him, for he was not a learned poet, though he knew the meaning of such words as chlorophyl, monocotyledonous, endogenous, exogenous, and all that. What he saw in a place which was both shady and sunny was neither more nor less than an ordinary yellow primrose in full flower. There they were, the dear little yellow stars, just as if it was April, though now the leaves of the trees were turning red and yellow, instead of being of the sweet young misty green of April weather. He took out his clasp-knife —for he never went into the woods without a clasp-knife as well as a hooked stick—and dug up the primrose, and put it in his pocket. As he did so, he thought he felt something alive that was much too big and too strong for an insect; but having often been told that he was mad (because he did not enjoy reading the police reports and the debates as other people did) he thought he must be mistaken, and went on his way. This led him along a bye-path to the beach, where, on a sudden turn of a beautifully-wooded lane, he came in full sight of the sea, with one sail—there was only one upon the whole horizon. He gave a great jump, like a rabbit, and called out very loud, though there was not a soul in sight to hear what he said. He was pretty sure there would not be, and that was the reason he had gone to this very place of all places in the world. Then he sat down in the bottom of a clump of hardy fir-trees, and took some wine and sandwiches out of his pocket. But he fancied as he sat down that he heard a child's voice say, "Oh, *don't*, please; you hurt!" This was very remarkable. "Never mind," says he, "I am only mad;" and he went on with his wine and sandwiches.

II.

When it was evening, he caught the train for his homeward journey; but all the people in it seemed very vexed at having to stop at a little station like that, and those who, like himself, were making the return journey, said, "Here is that mad-looking man again: he has been eating blackberries, and there is something green sticking out of his pocket." As he bumped down upon his seat in the carriage, he fancied he again heard the little voice saying, "Oh, *don't*, please; you hurt!" This certainly puzzled him a good deal; but on looking round he saw that a lady passenger at the farther end of the seat had a baby at her breast. He scarcely knew what to do, being so much puzzled, as I said before; but, being a very polite man, he said,

"I beg your pardon, ma'am, but I hope I didn't hurt your baby?"

"My baby, sir?" says the lady, very much astonished; "you did not touch it: there are three people between us."

"Exactly, thank you; I beg your pardon. All right, captain." This was his way. Whenever he said "all right," he put "captain" to it; but the lady was rather surprised at his behaviour. However, after a few minutes, feeling quite certain that somebody had spoken, and some child too, he plucked up a courage and said to the lady,

"That seems a very fine child of yours, ma'am; how old is it?"

"Four months and a week to-day, sir," said the lady.

This rather staggered him, so he said over again,

"It seems a very fine child."

This was repetition, but the mother was pleased, and smiled, and joggled the baby up and down so much in order to exhibit it, that at last it began to cry.

The mad poet thought to himself—"Babies of four months old do not talk, I think; but a week might make a difference, perhaps."

Then, turning to the lady again, he asked,

"Can your baby talk yet, ma'am?"

At this the mother felt more flattered than ever. It was certainly a remarkable question, but she said to herself, "Oh, poor fellow, he is an old bachelor!"—and then, aloud, "Not much, sir."

"Well, ma'am," said the poet, in a loud voice, for he was getting angry at not being able to account for the little voice he had heard—"well, ma'am, look here!" says he. "Could your baby say, 'Oh, *please* don't! You hurt'?"

"No, sir, not yet, I think," replied the mother, looking rather frightened, and clutching the baby, because she thought the poet might be a Government Inspector, who was trying to see if her child was up to the proper standard of the New Code of the Committee of Council on Education. "You see, sir, he hasn't cut a single tooth yet," added she; "but I teach him all I can."

"Much obliged—I beg pardon," said the poet, and gave it up.

But one of the gentlemen in the carriage whispered to another,

"This is a madman! Our lives are in danger. Had we not better pull the string, alarm the guard, stop the train, and get him put out?"

"Wait till we get to the next station," said the other gentleman. "He looks very harmless, and I dare say he is only an eccentric character."

III.

BUT the fact is they never reached the next station at all. Owing to some confusion between the staff system and the interlocking system, a misunderstanding with the Board of Trade, and some oversights on the part of two or three officials, who had been very much underworked and overpaid, the train in which the poet sat was run into by an express in front and a luggage behind, and a good deal of damage ensued. Fifteen hundred passengers were killed and two thousand severely wounded—for this was a large train. And among the slain were the poet himself, the poor baby, and the unfeeling passenger who wanted to stop the train and get the poor poet turned out into the open country fifty miles from his home. Although the baby of four months old was killed, its mother was not touched. The mad poet was, you may say, pounded to a jelly; but his autumn-flowering primrose survived the general wreck, and something besides the primrose.

IV.

THIS was no other than a fairy girl, who had been hiding under the primrose all the while. Now, although the poor mother was not damaged in her body, she was in her mind, for the shock sent her out of her senses, and when, in coming to after a swoon, she saw this fairy girl peering from under a primrose-leaf, she took it to be her own baby, and carried it home with her. Of course, in her condition no one liked to undeceive her; so she nursed the fairy as well as she could, and it got bigger and plumper, and more like a human child every day.

By-and-bye the poor mother got her wits back, and was very much surprised to find her child, as she called it, so backward in some things and so forward in others; but she attributed it all to the shock, and things went on pretty much as they do between other parents and their children, except that at a very early age indeed Autumn Primrose—for that was the name she went by—used to tell fairy tales out of her own head.

V.

ONE day, when she was about eight years old, a School Board visitor called, and said he had found out that there was a child there who was not on the register of any public elementary school, and he wished to ascertain if it was receiving efficient elementary instruction.

"I am sure, sir," said the mother, colouring up very much, "I know my duty to my child; and I take it very unkindly that you ask me if we send her to school. Of course we do! You might as well come and ask if we starve her!"

"My good woman," said the visitor, "you do not know the law,"—and he then read to her the whole of the 74th Clause of the Elementary Education Act, 1870, the 24th Clause of the Elementary Education Amendment Act, 1873,—Form No. 1 of the Bye-Laws of the School Board, and the Regulations of the School Board for enforcing compulsory attendance.

This made the mother cry, and she said she still thought it very hard upon good parents to have people coming to the house to stand between them and their children; but Primrose, though she too seemed angry, laughed and jumped about the visitor, and several times ran pins into his legs.

At this moment the father came in, and the visitor explained it all to him likewise.

"We are doing a great and good work, sir," said the visitor.

"You may be doing some good," says the father, keeping down his rage; "but you are also doing a great deal of harm by interfering between good parents and their children."

But the visitor proceeded to examine Primrose, as well as she would let him—which did not come to much, for at every question she stuck a pin into his leg, and he soon got tired of it. At last he said,

"I must report this child to the Divisional Committee as not receiving efficient instruction. She does not even know that one times one is one!"

"I don't believe it is," said Primrose.

"I never saw such depths of ignorance," said the School Board man.

But just then Primrose began telling him a fairy tale.

"I cannot stop and listen to this," said he. "Fairy literature is not among the Discretionary Subjects recognized by the New Code. There is no grant for results under that head."

But by this time, in spite of the pins in his legs, he was getting interested against his will, and he actually sat and listened to the fairy tale Primrose told, until it was too late to proceed with his duties for the day. The consequence was that he was all behind with his register for the week, and was severely reprimanded by the Divisional Committee of the district.

"Never mind," said he to himself, "I shall have my revenge."

He had found his legs all over marks from pins, and as he had every reason to believe they were not so when he got up that morning, and had felt pricking sensations while in the house where Primrose resided, he naturally attributed the marks on his legs to that particular visit. For the beautiful fairy tale he had been entertained with he felt not the least gratitude, as the New Code does not recognize fairy tales. He had found out that the parents of Primrose were Dissenters.—I *think* they went habitually to the services of the Primitive Bible-Christian Anti-Schismatic New Brotherhood, which were held in a loft over a stable. Now, the greater number of the members of the Divisional Committee were rather high Churchmen, and, in a quiet way each member endeavoured to work the Act as to increase his own religious party. So, when the visitor said—incidentally, as if he did not mean it—that the parents of Primrose were Dissenters, the Committee immediately sent them Notice A, calling upon them to appear before the Board and explain how it was that the child was neither attending a public elementary school within the meaning of the Act, nor receiving efficient instruction in some other manner. Unfortunately, Primrose went with them before the Committee, and, almost before they knew where they were, had them all tight in another fairy tale, so that the Divisional Committee sat very late that night, and broke up at last in an undecided manner. It certainly seemed very strange that a child who, though it had been to school, either could not or would not say the multiplication-table as far as twice one, and did not appear to know where London was, should be able to tell such beautiful fairy tales. However, at the next meeting the Divisional Committee pulled themselves together, and had Notice B, threatening a summons before a magistrate, served upon the parents of Primrose. This the parents took no notice of, because if Primrose had not learnt her multiplication-table in a very small school, where she had the twentieth part of a teacher all to herself, they did not see why she should learn it any better in a school where she would have only the three-hundredth part of a teacher. At last they were summoned before the magistrate, and though they told him of the railway accident, which, they thought, might have affected the girl's head, the magistrate, having examined her in arithmetic, grammar, and geography (with the help of some books, for he understood neither of them himself), said she must go to a Board School at once. Immediately the worthy magistrate had pronounced this decision, Primrose began telling a fairy tale, which was so interesting that he listened and listened till it was nearly time to shut up the court, upon which he stated that for the present he would not fine the parents, but would give them fourteen days' grace in which to put the child into a public elementary school within the meaning of the Act.

VI.

THE school to which Primrose now went was a handsome place, with handsome school furniture, certificated teachers, and everything nice. This accommodation was paid for out of the means of other people, who did not get near such good accommodation for their own children at schools where they paid dear. In spite, however, of the certificated teachers—who, of course, gave efficient instruction—Primrose never appeared to learn anything that was recognized by the New Code. Besides that, she used to find ways and means of telling all the other children fairy tales; the effect of which was that they all went back terribly in their learning, because the certificated teachers could not make them attend. It was handers! handers! from morning to afternoon in that school, and yet the children remained ignorant. What was the consequence? Why, when H.M. Inspector visited that school in due course for the annual examination, he found things in such a state, that he had to report to my Lords at the Privy Council that the teaching was inefficient. There was no payment on results that year. The only thing in which the children had learnt anything was drawing, and that they had done because Primrose had encouraged them to make caricatures of the head master and mistress, the assistant master and mistress, and all the pupil teachers; and, in fact, the walls and doors in the neighbourhood for a mile round were covered with such caricatures.

VII.

OF course, all this was very mortifying to the educational authorities of the district and at Whitehall. They were, indeed, at their wits' end. All the subjects recognized by the New Code had been taught in this school by a full staff of certificated teachers and assistants, and yet none of the scholars knew anything. Within a short distance there were other public elementary schools, where numbers of boys were up to the sixth standard, and could do any sum you pleased under the metric system, in grammes, décimètres, and all that; but here not a child knew its multiplication-table, or could go through an ordinary object lesson—much less give the meaning and definition of the word "cainozoic," or explain, *in his own language*, as other sixth-standard boys could, the interaction of the remoter causes which are supposed to have led to the primeval divarications of form between the Brachycephalic and Dolichocephalic tribes of the Turanian races shortly after the commencement of the Glacial Epoch.

All the neighbouring private schools were, of course, very glad; for they said, "These people have been building on our previous labours, and yet they have taken away our scholars, though we have paid the cost of what they have been doing."

VIII.

OF course there was, after all this, a grand investigation by a Special Committee of the Privy Council, with numerous and various assessors; and at last it struck somebody that the decadence of the school dated from the enrolment of Autumn Primrose as a scholar. They immediately had her up to Whitehall, and subjected her to a most searching cross-examination, but entirely failed to shake her testimony, which consisted exclusively of fairy tales. Mr. Lingen, Mr. Buckmaster, Mr. Theodore Walrond, Mr. Iselin, Mr. Scudamore, Mr. Robert Lowe, three thousand seven hundred and thirty-six ordinary Government inspectors—a small portion of the number which it had now become necessary for the taxpayers to support—and all the great competitive examination guns were present, but they could make nothing of Autumn Primrose, who, when they asked her a question founded on one of the standards of the New Code, always answered by telling a fairy tale, or something of that kind. When she was asked by Mr. Lingen what the alphabet was, she replied, singing and dancing,

"Great A, little A, bouncing B—
The cat's in the cupboard, and she can't see!"

"What," said Mr. Scudamore, who, as a great financier, had been brought down special—"what is simple addition?"

To this Primrose answered, "Jack and his eleven brothers."

"Let me try," said Mr. Buckmaster; "I will show her how to make an omelette, and then examine her upon the process."

So saying, he made a snatch at Mr. Lowe's hat.

"That is the only hat I have got in the world," said Mr. Lowe: "A human being has only one head: why, then, should he have two hats?"

But his appeal came too late. Mr. Buckmaster had already made the omelette, and turned it out, sizzling, upon one of the departmental portfolios. Then, looking round with an air of triumph, Mr. Buckmaster said to the child,

"Now, there is only one thing wanting to make this omelette perfect, and it is an herb. I have left it out in order to test your knowledge and intelligence. Is *that* it?" says Mr. Buckmaster, producing a sprig of knotted marjoram from his pocket. For Mr. Buckmaster always carries everything about with him, except when he drops it; which I on mention because the last time I saw him in the street a packet of meat-bones and butcher's pieces fell out of his pocket, wrapped up in a cook's paper cap, which appeared to be made of a chromo-lithograph of a Raphael. "Is *that* it?" says Mr. Buckmaster, laying down the marjoram.

"No, it isn't," said the child, and appeared to dive under the table, right between Mr. Walrond's legs. Stranger than all, instead of the marjoram, there was a primrose on the table in full flower.

There was a minute's pause, and a sense of savage disappointment ran through the majority of the assembly. That all the expensive and magnificent machinery provided by the State at the public expense for educating the masses should be stultified by a child was too much. At last, after drawing a deep breath, all the persons present exclaimed, with one voice, "Spiritualism!"—for they had been reading Mr. A. R. Wallace's account of the sudden production of dewy ferns and hyacinths by the Spirits out of nothing underneath the table. Mr. Lowe, indeed, had not joined in this exclamation; and the Duke of Richmond, who had from the first been much scandalized by the unbusiness-like character of the proceedings, simply remarked, with dignity,

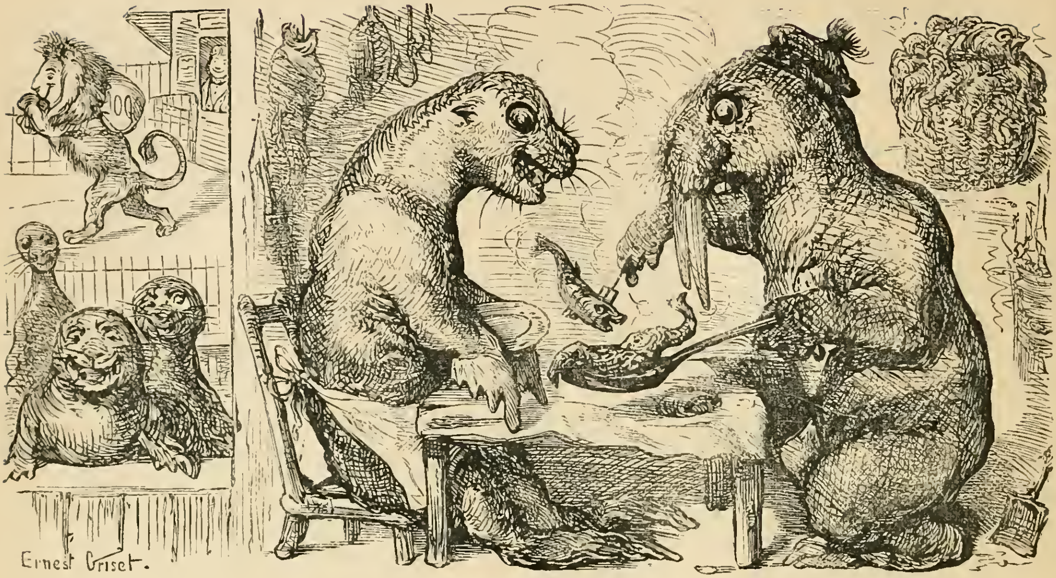
"The girl must go to an industrial school."

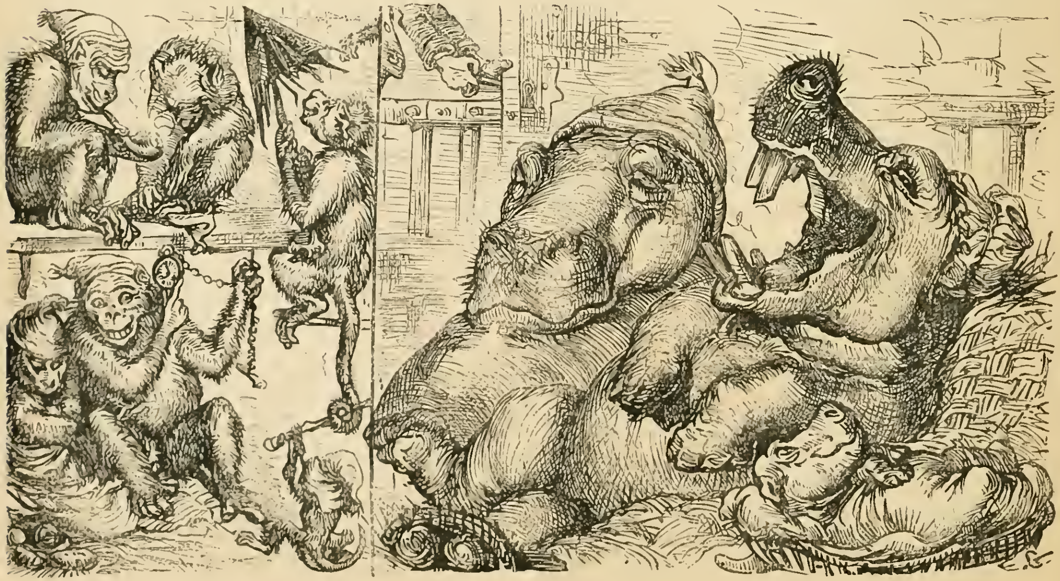
"When you can catch her," says Mr. Lowe.

And, indeed, there was reason in this clause, for Autumn Primrose could nowhere be found, though all H.M. inspectors joined in the chase. At last Mr. Lowe, disgusted at the unpractical nature of the whole business, put the omelette into his hat for his supper, and made off. The mysterious flower was sent to the South Kensington Museum; and at that point we must, for the present, leave the fortunes of Autumn Primrose.

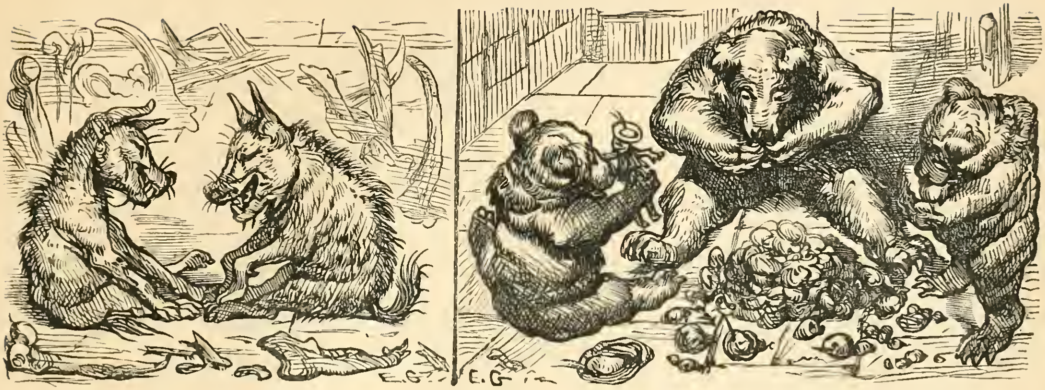
MATTHEW BROWNE.

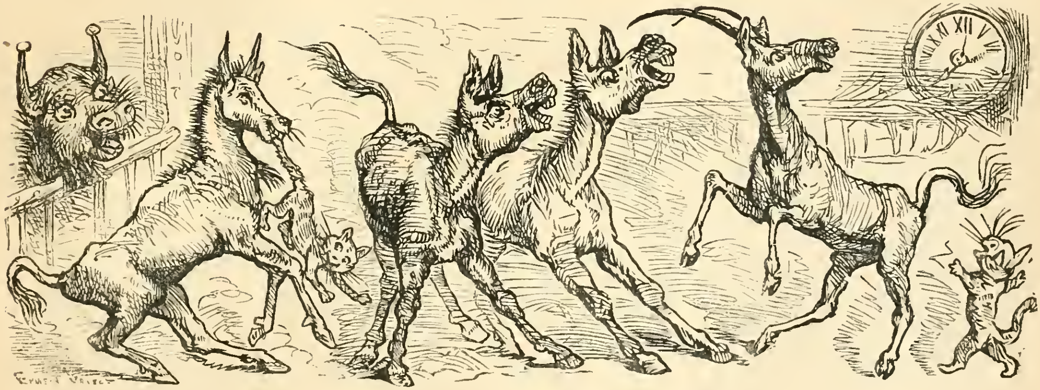
THE ZOO BY NIGHT.

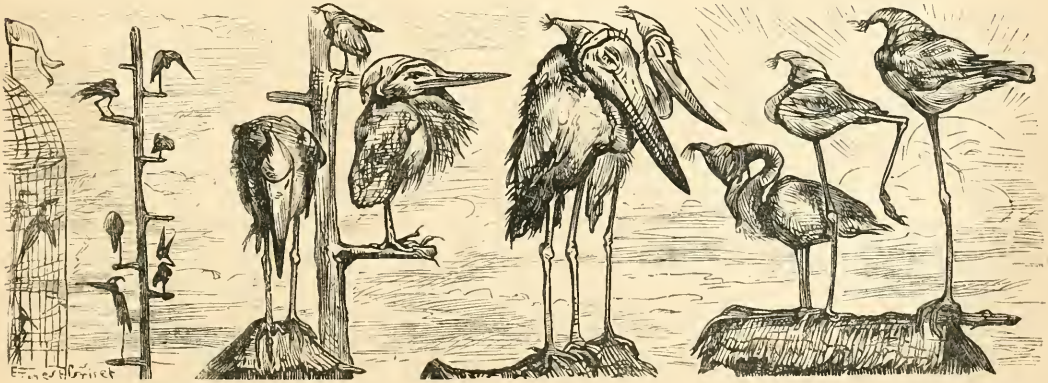

100
Ernest Griset.



THE ZOO BY NIGHT.




Ernest Griset


Ernest Griset

THE ZOO BY NIGHT.

WHEN the Zoo they close,
And the world repose
Has sought in one universal doze,

Then the time must be,
It appears to me,
When the animals all indulge in a spree.

Then the walrus and seal,
O'er a fried-fish meal,
Little facts of their former life reveal.

And the lion wakes
The keeper, and takes
To the family den a supper of steaks.

And the otters take sights
At the party who writes
On a board, "Beware! for the otter bites."

And the lanky giraffe
Will the camel chaff,
Because his neck 's not so long by half!

Then the monkeys display
The treasures that they
Have managed to pilfer, through the day—

The watches and "wipes,"
Umbrellas and pipes,
That you don't get back when they 're in their gripes.

And hippo' deplores
That his missus snores,
Till the baby hippo' wakes up and roars.

The rhinoceros blows
The horn on his nose,
And his musical talent loudly shows.

And the elephant slow,
Who can trumpet so,
Gets jealous, and packs up his trunk to go,

And treat the baboon
To a lively tune
In his natural bass on his own bassoon.

And the snakes all swear
They are not aware
"Who swallowed the blanket!" as folks declare.

And the wolf and his wife,
The pride of his life,
Clean up the bones without ever a knife.

And the greedy bears
Bolt buns, cakes, and pears,
That have tumbled into that pit of theirs.

Then the buffalo
And the quagga show
That "the time of day" they very well know,

And kick and prance,
In a midnight dance,
And do not the ease of the cats enhance.

But the stork and crane
Quite quiet remain:
They have put on their night-caps, it is plain.

And the flamin-*goes*,
On the slender toes,
Curl round their tortuous necks and doze.

But one night, they 'd a fright
When a barge took light,
And nearly blew them all up outright!

T. E. H. G.

THE CASTING VOTE.

[From the Archives of the Soberwit Club.]

AS we are all old men, our conversation, as we sit round the fire in our quaint little club-room, is apt to partake largely of personal reminiscences and memories of our younger days. With these we beguile many a long winter night, patient listeners even to familiar tales which, having lost the charm of novelty, yet interest us from our regard for those who tell them.

For all that we are so staid and quiet now, we have lived through stirring times. Many of us have taken active parts in the business of life, and Mr. Josias, our beloved founder, can more especially look back upon a chequered and eventful career. He can recall the time when, as a child, he cowered beneath the bed-clothes of a night, in mortal fear of the advent of "Boney." To his youthful eyes the slender figure of Pitt and the rotund proportions of Fox were as familiar as are those of the rival leaders of to-day. As a young man he had mingled with the exquisites in St. James's Street, in a coat with the waist between his shoulder-blades, and a cocked hat; and it was in his mature life that the cry for Reform first broke forth, and the country was wild with apprehension at the prospect of the ruin, which, as we all know, has in consequence overtaken it.

"Those were the days!" he is wont to say, in special allusion to early Reform agitation. "We talk of our politics. Pshaw! there are no politics now. They have been as effectually 'confounded' as ever those of our enemies can be, though we bring an illimitable national-anthem-power to bear upon them. It isn't the same thing."

"All public spirit has died out!" some one in our little circle will remark.

"Spirit, sir!" is the inevitable rejoinder. "What can be expected in a country where a candidate dare not do as he likes with his own? where a knot of ribbon is constructive bribery? where the scrape of a fiddle is rank corruption, and inviting a friend or two to take pot-luck with him means absolute unseating?"

Fierce words: but a merry twinkle of the eyes robs them of half their ferocity. Josias Soberwit is of the old school, but he can appreciate the new. He is not the least bit offended that his fulminations provoke a smile; a puckering tendency about the corners of his own mouth may be even faintly perceptible.

Yet with all seeming gravity, he will, when the humour is in him, proceed somewhat after this fashion:

Elections! ah, I have taken part at many a one, when elections were elections. And what merry times we had! It was only then that the country woke up; the drowsy old towns threw off their lethargy, and the counties flared and sputtered with life, like the log on the hearth there, that seemed a dead thing half an hour ago. The small towns were especially lively—they were strongholds, and felt their importance. Places with a handful of freemen lorded it over populous cities, and were so proud of being bought and sold—twice over sometimes, and then prouder than ever,—that the riot and excess in them ran to the verge of madness, so that at times a dose of cold steel had to be prescribed for the people, and the military were called out to "exhibit" it.

And that reminds me, we were near upon it, at the little town of Lewes, in the year—what was the year? No matter; it was when the Duke of Newcastle contested the borough, and in a way that showed he meant to have it, let who would oppose him. A clean, quiet, cozy little town is Lewes; nestling snugly round the base of the old castle, and with only the barren downs spreading like a sea around it. The long straggling High Street might be given up to rifle practice by the local corps any day almost, and no harm to any living soul. It is a fiery little place, for all that: party spirit has, time out of mind, been rampant in it. Every Lewes man is born with a legacy of political acrimony, dating from Heaven knows when—from far beyond the old Jacobite days, if we may judge by the spirit the "bonfire boys" contrive to infuse even into Fifth of November observances.

Party spirit never ran higher than at this contest of which I speak, and the parties were never more nearly matched. Even the lawyers engaged to conduct the contest were puzzled; they could count their strength on either side pretty nearly, but neither knew to a nicety what the result would be. It was believed that a single vote might turn the scale.

Of course the more obvious this became, the more confidence the Duke's men assumed. They put on a lofty air, swaggered up and down the High Street, and veiled contempt for the other side—Blandford's side—under the guise of pity for their infatuation, which might have had its effect, only Blandford's men did the same. Their bearing was equally lofty, their swagger quite as imposing, and their pity for the "Duke's lot" as undisguised. In the midst of the noise and turmoil, riot and dissipation, lynx eyes were kept upon the electors. In those days contests lasted a fortnight, and in a fortnight much might happen. It was quite on the cards that somebody might drink himself to death, which fortuitous occurrence would in itself have sufficed to change the colour of the political representation of the borough. Such things had happened as freemen being induced to set out on journeys on the eve of the polling-days, and freemen had, it was whispered, been sent on journeys (dead drunk in the straw in the bottom of carriers' carts) without the formality of inducement being gone through.

That the "Duke's lot" were capable of anything was well known. That there was nothing which "Blandy's boys" were incapable of, was asserted with equal confidence. The lawyers—who, the best of friends at all other times, never spoke from the coming down of the writ till all was over—shook their heads dubiously. There was nothing for it but to feed the flame of excitement, and keep a sharp look-out.

As time went on things took a curious turn. Both sides began to manifest particular interest in a townsman, for whom at all other times every man among them had the utmost contempt. This man was Noll Tumper by name: his ostensible occupation that of a tailor—his real occupation that of drinking himself into his grave. Incidentally he had drunk himself into a huge mass of unwholesome flesh—into a round fiery face and bulbous nose, and into a greasy and begrimed condition, not improved by a course of sleeping in tap-rooms and stables all the election-time, during which he had never gone through the formality of taking off his clothes or washing his face.

All of a sudden, as I have said, Noll Tumper found himself the hero of the hour. One morning the Duke was seen walking down High Street with him, arm-in-arm, to the committee-rooms at the Star. That afternoon Blandford gave him a seat in his carriage down to his committee-rooms at the White Hart. The Duke was pained beyond expression at a slight cough from which Noll appeared to suffer, recommended old port, and sent twelve dozen of the best to his house that very night. Blandford was concerned to hear that Mrs. Tumper was indisposed: was afraid she did not wrap up enough (it was in the middle of August), and prevailed on Noll to permit him to offer her, with his compliments, three new silk dresses, each of a different colour, and a sable tippet.

Tumper was not ungrateful; but Tumper was so stupid. He didn't understand politics, and that was the fact. The Dook was a nice gen'elman, and not at all 'igh and mighty; and Mister Blandford was that kind, he'd talked to him more like a brother than anythink else. But as to which was best for the country, that was beyond him. He just shouldn't vote, and that was a fact—then he shouldn't offend neither.

Offend them! That seemed impossible. They had both got so fond of him by this time that they were never happy out of his society. His company was so capital, they protested; his humour so rich and racy; and as for telling a tale, never was there man like him! The ladies must see him—that was certain; and the ladies did see him. They flocked about him like so many doves—cooing and fluttering, and all so anxious to adorn him with their respective colours.

"Buff and blue was," the Duke's lady supporters declared, "the most becoming mixture."

"Red and green," Mrs. Blandford assured him, "set him off like a flower in his button-hole."

Noll took the favours—he took everything, for that matter; but went on up to within an hour of the close of the poll protesting that it was all too much for his muddle-brain, and that he shouldn't vote. There was, however, one hopeful sign: he kept quite sober on polling-day. It seemed as if his patriotic instincts were struggling with his ignorance; and people winked at one another, and pursed up their lips, and confidently affirmed that "Noll was safe enough."

Still he allowed the day—the last day—to pass until only an hour remained—until, in fact, the numbers were equal, and the issue of the election depended on a single vote. Then he disappeared; vanished from the scene; was not to be found! The utmost consternation prevailed. Lewes was in an uproar. Its fate hung on Noll's lips, and Noll was gone! Half an hour passed; the town grew frantic. Suddenly Mrs. Blandford and her lady friends, filling the carriage, dashed up to the polling-place. She hastily whispered her husband. He turned ghastly pale and trembled.

"Lost him!" he gasped.

"Yes; we were too late."

"Impossible!"

The word was drowned by the roar of the multitude announcing the return of the wanderer. There he was, coming swaggering along, radiant, triumphant, and a moving wonder of blue and buff—cockade in his hat, cockade on his breast, scarf round his waist, and a banneret in his hand.

He had been found.

Curiously enough, the Duke himself had found him: had met him in the street near the Judge's chambers—which his Grace occupied for the election-time—quite accidentally: met him tramping along, all excitement, and bitterly denouncing "Foxy Blandford" and all his works.

The Duke was equal to the occasion.

Going up to him, with unaffected frankness he held out both hands.

"What!" cried he: "my jolly friend, you here! Been down to vote?"

"No," was the answer, "I haven't and"——

The Duke burst in with a laugh, and lifting his hands, cried in his playful way,

"Oh, Tumper! Tumper! haste and give a plumper!"

Tickled with the jest, Noll echoed his Grace's laugh.

"Capital! capital!" he burst out. "I *must* remember that. It's sure to go out of my stupid head, though. Wait a minute; I'll write it down. Sure to forget it. Where's a scrap of paper?"

He began fumbling in his pockets, but the Duke anticipated his wishes. Taking out a morocco pocket-book, he drew from thence a crisp, crackling, new-looking piece of paper, oblong in shape, and turning the printed side down, offered it for the purpose. Nolly eagerly caught at the paper, held it up to the light so as to see through it, as if curious about the water-mark, nodded his head in token of satisfaction, and then, strangely enough, instead of writing on the paper, thrust it into his pocket. Then he snatched the favour from the Duke's breast and attached it to his own, muttering as he did so, "Tumper, Tumper, haste to give a plumper!"

And the plumper was given.

Noll emerged from the polling-booth triumphant, with the air of a man who had sacrificed himself on the altar of his country, and when a mighty shout of "Newcastle for ever!" rose from the crowd, he bowed low, and dodged a brickbat aimed at his head by an enraged Blandfordite with infinite grace. A proposition to chair him through the town was met by a counter-proposition to duck him in the river, and as the parties in the crowd were about equally matched, his fate for the moment seemed trembling in the balance; but the Duke's agents were good tacticians, and had a dozen or so of brawny ruffians ready at their beck to circle round Noll and secure his safety. Moreover, a judicious reference to the possible arrival of the military from Brighton in the event of a riot was not without effect.

The safety of the Duke also had to be looked to. But his Grace manifested no alarm. Exuberant in the fact of having won the day, he seemed to have no immediate thought beyond that of expressing his gratitude to Noll.

"You have done me good service, Noll," said he, "and I 'm grateful to you."

"I 've a hundred good reasons for believing in your Grace's sincerity," replied Noll, with a grin.

He was, you see, developing quite a courtly style from mixing with the grand folks during election-time.

"You 're a fine fellow, Noll," rejoined the Duke, slapping him on the shoulder, "and you won't find that you've made a mistake in serving me. I shall be only too happy to serve you in return. Tell me now, what can I do for you?"

"May it please your Grace," replied Noll, "there is an exciseman of this town, Tim Pebbles by name, who 's very old and very ill. Now, if he should die"——

"You would like to jump into his place? Good. You are a fitting man."

"Yes, your Grace, if a knowledge of liquor may make one so," responded Noll, modestly.

"Exactly, and you shall have the place with all my heart. I wish he were dead and buried already, for your sake; the instant he is, come to me. You shall be admitted at any hour and under any circumstances. Yes, my honest Noll, I would see you though I should leave the King himself sitting mumchance in the Cabinet, waiting my return."

Another slap on the back, and the Duke retired amidst his adherents to enjoy his triumph and forget the cause of it, while the latter hugged himself on the gracious promise, and betook himself to fresh potations by way of solace, while he awaited the death of the exciseman.

The course of events was less rapid in those days than in these; still, fresh excitements were constantly springing up. Thus, in a very short time the general election had become worn threadbare as a topic, and other matters formed the staple of public conversation. Among other points it came to be announced that the King of Spain was in a precarious condition, suffering from a disorder which he could not possibly survive. Among those who betrayed the utmost anxiety on this question was the Duke of Newcastle. He had his own reasons for desiring the very earliest news of the expected demise of his Catholic Majesty, and even went so far as to dispatch couriers to Madrid with instructions that they should return with all speed the instant the announcement of the expected event should be made. Ignorant of the hour at which any of them might arrive, yet burning with impatience, his Grace remained at his town mansion, and gave the strictest orders to his attendants to admit instantly any one who should arrive on business of moment at any hour of the day or night.

Knowing his Grace's anxiety, they were scrupulous to obey the orders with literal exactness, and before long the opportunity for doing so offered itself. About two o'clock one morning, the Duke, who had been in bed about an hour, was roused from his slumbers, and informed that a messenger had arrived in hot haste.

"Admit him!" cried the Duke, with ecstacy.

It was hardly necessary to go through the formality. The man was already at the door, and rushing into the room in a transport of joy, cried out,

"Dead, my lord! he 's dead!"

"That 's well, my dear friend," rejoined the Duke, "I 'm glad of it, with all my soul. When did he die?"

"The night before last, please your Grace."

"What, so lately? Why, my good fellow, you must have flown! This is indeed zeal in my interests. Tell me, how can I reward you?"

"All that I wish for in the world," replied the other, eagerly, "is that your Grace would please to remember your kind promise and appoint me to succeed him."

The Duke sprang up in bed.

"What!" he screamed. "Make you King of Spain! Are you demented? Let 's look at you."

Throwing aside the curtains, he found himself face to face with Noll Tumper, his electioneering friend, whose bloodshot eyes seemed starting from his head like those of a lobster, while his mouth was fairly agape with astonishment at words which he failed utterly to comprehend.

"King! Spain! no—Tim Pebbles!" he gasped.

But the Duke, wild with rage, had already shrieked to those about him to expel the ruffian, and rid him of his detestable presence. Nor were rage and disappointment unnatural. To be routed up out of sleep was bad enough; but to have his hopes apparently gratified, and then rudely dashed with disappointment, was beyond patient endurance. Noll Tumper was wont to say that he never left a house with such celerity as he did the Duke's mansion in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

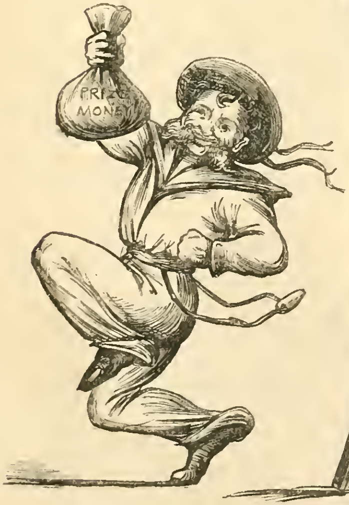
It was not, however, in his Grace's nature to bear resentment, and when the irritation occasioned by his disappointment had passed away, he began to be diverted, and even to divert his friends with the humour of the incident. He admitted that he had brought the thing upon himself by his own exuberant protestations of gratitude to a man whom he ought to have despised, and who was forgotten as soon as his electioneering service was rendered. And in the end he kept his word to Noll. Unable to raise him to the throne of Spain, he made him—an exciseman!

William Sawyer.

* * *

IL PENSEROSO.

"Seu ratio dederit seu fors objecerit."
Hor.: *Sat.* I. 2.

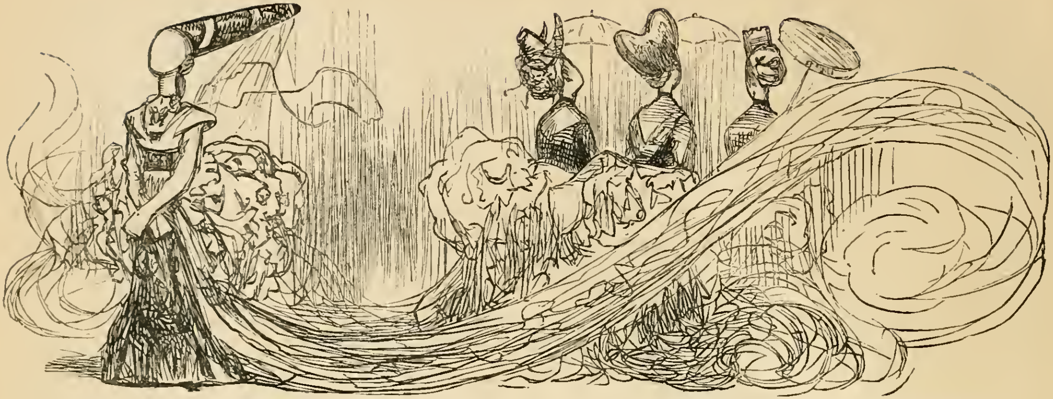


IN the days long since, heigho!
When we used to undergo
All the irksomeness of school,
No one thought himself a fool;
And yet the truth one can't disguise,
Very few could win a prize.
And though the binding of each book,
Which e'en the lucky winners took,
With rich emblazonments might glow,
Still the contents were often slow;
Perhaps a "Life of Ham and Shem,"
Or "Treatise on Jerusalem;"
And when we now the world survey,
Just the same it seems to-day.

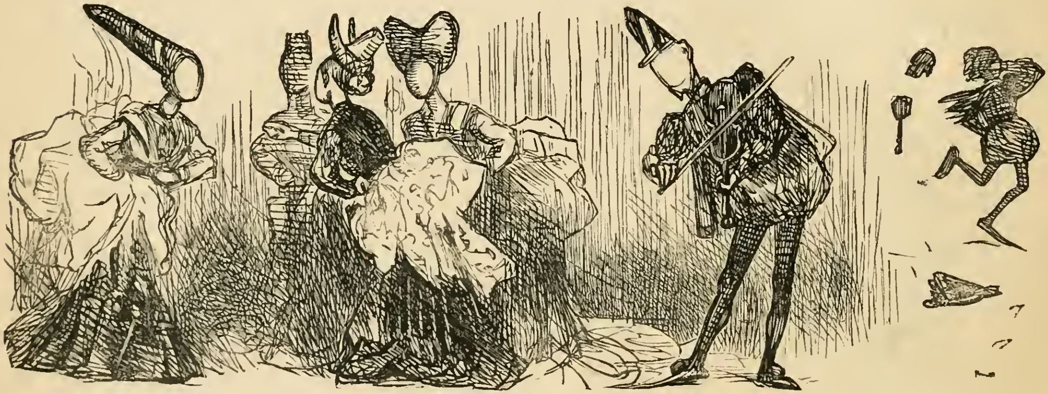
Some people set their hearts on cash,
While others think that money's trash;
Some wish to earn a fleeting fame,
And some to win a glorious name;
And some there are who think that love
Is every other thing above.
There's many another strong desire,
Which to set down would only tire.
Now, though some few may get the prize,
Which none but they themselves despise,
Yet nearly all leave off by finding—
The Book is not quite worth the Binding!

J. Goldsmith.

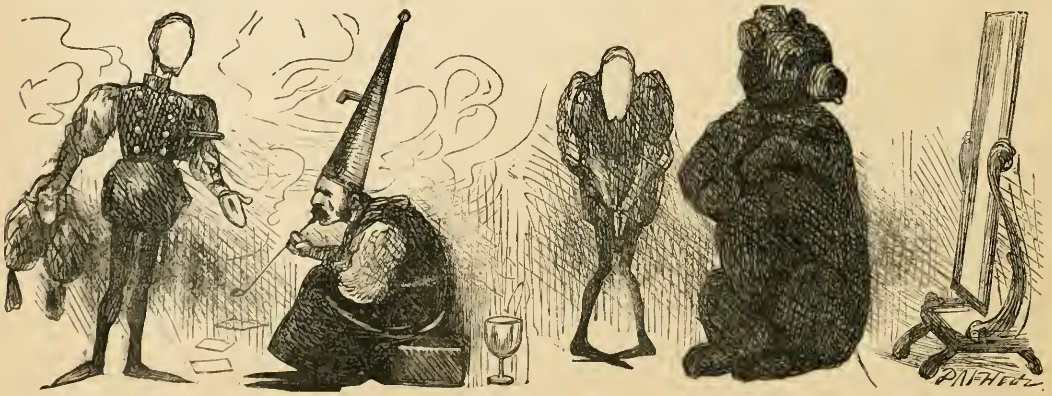
LONG, LONG AGO.



Once upon a time there was a young and lovely Princess, who thought herself younger and lovelier than all the other Princesses.

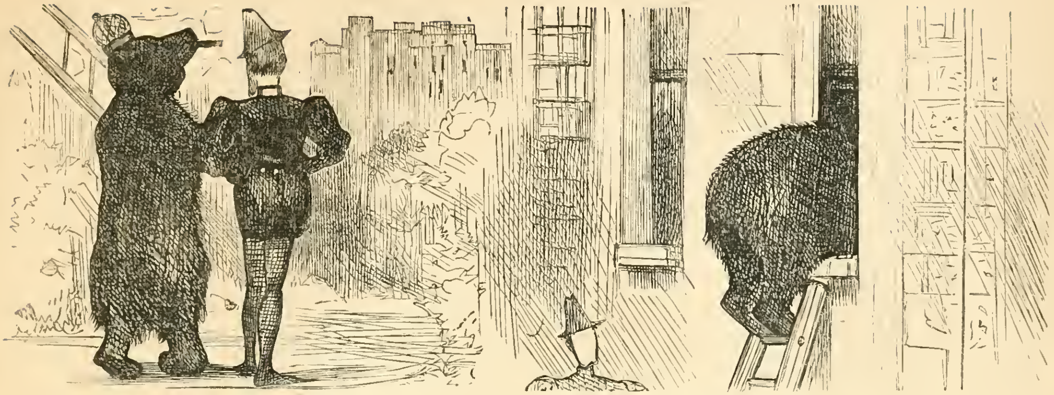


And there was also a young and lovely Prince, who endeavoured to promote harmony among the young and lovely Princesses but the y. and l. Princesses declined respectfully to listen to him.

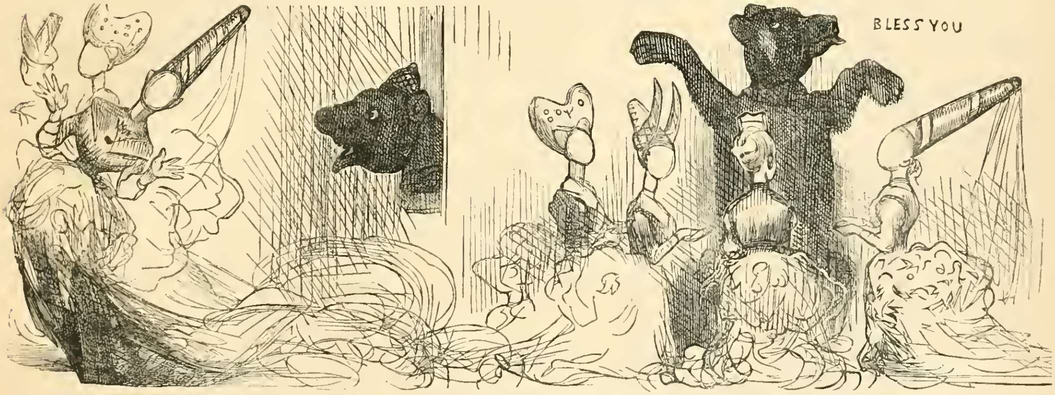


So he went and requested the assistance of a certain magician. Now, the magician was an ancestor of our friend TYMPKYNS, and he said, "Where, O Prince, is the talisman?" And when he had received the talisman, he proceeded to business;

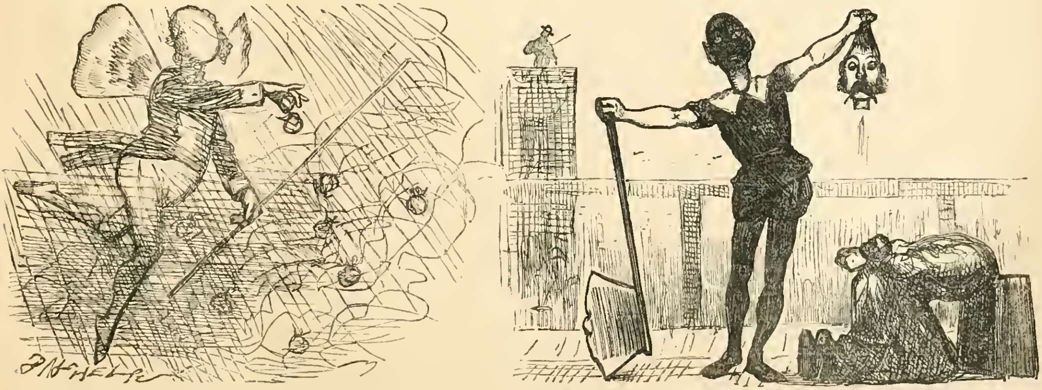
LONG, LONG AGO.



Also to the palace. And looked in in a friendly way on the y. and l. Princesses ;



Refusing to go till they had settled their little differences by agreeing to toss for precedence.



Then the Spirit of Peace descended, and the Princesses lived happily ever after. As for the magician TYMPKYNS, the Prince very properly provided for him. So he got his talisman back again.

THE PHANTOM FISHING-BOAT.

IT is the night of All Souls. The sea is sombre and grey;
And the wind comes in with a wailing sound as of voices far away—
Far away in the distance. There are hearts know well, how far
From the little pier, on the sea-coast here, those well-loved voices are.

Yes! along the pier in the driving fog the fisherwomen wait,
For the boats are due from Newfound-land, and the little fleet is late.
Oh, the season has been a wild one, and all the length of the coast
Each wave that broke, of the tempest spoke, and the white foam flew like a ghost.

Out of the narrow harbour to the icebound ocean wide
The little fleet had borne away all Pollet's boast and pride,—
The old men with their wisdom, the young men with their strength,
And the little lads whose turn must come to take their place at length.

They sailed—sailed out of the harbour. They sailed—sailed into the bay,
Till the pier-head light and the spectral cliffs in the night-gloom sank away.
Now the fishing-season is over, and the mothers and wives are here,
Watching—waiting—to see the fleet of the fishing-boats appear.

The sea-mist is dank and heavy, and the lights burn wan and dim.
At the foot of the great tall crucifix there kneel to pray to Him—
Who can bring the distant dear one o'er the ocean strong and wild—
Full many a wife and mother, and many a trusting child.

"A boat!" A boat in the offing! Her tawny canvas was spread,
As out of the mist she plunged o'er the foam, and neared the old pier-head,
And under the lee she glided, sheet loosened, with flapping sail;
While over the hull one great grey gull did wail—and wail—and wail!

Then the rope is flung—but never a tongue is heard from the vessel's deck;
And the rope is fast; but with fear o'ercast their cheer the watchers check.
But here are Elise, and Mère Louise, and here is La Veuve Toinette,
To join one and all the ship to haul to the quai, with her canvas set.

And little Jean must tug at the rope, though his limbs are not yet strong,
And Nanette's wee babe stretches down a hand, as she hauls the ship along.
And so on its way to the fisher's quai they tow the silent bark,
That into the harbour sailed from the sea, so sombre and grey and dark.

But when, by the great tall crucifix, whence the suffering Lord looks down,
And the blue-robed Virgin blesses the boats that sail from the little town,
That vessel slid, in the mist half-hid,——she vanished like mist away,
And the idle rope in the toilers' hands like a severed cable lay!

And every hand, that touched a strand of the phantom vessel's rope,
Clasped never again, from over the main, the hand that had been its hope.
The fleet returned! But many a boat that had sailed from the pier so gay,
With her luckless crew, slept under the blue of the waters far away.

And still on the night of All Souls, when they're due from Newfound-land,
Does that phantom come, by the spirits dumb of the year's drowned fishers manned;
And still the wives, and the mothers, and the children haul on the rope,
Till the ship is towed to the crucifix, where they've breathed such prayers of hope.

And those who must do it do it! for they know that this thing must be
For the peace of the souls of the loved ones who have lost their lives at sea.
Can you smile at the quaint old legend of the sunken vessel's wraith,
At the tears in the eyes of the children, or the weeping women's faith?

T. HOOD.

A HUNGRY BOY.

IT was no fault of mine that I was a very small boy with a very large appetite; that almost as soon as I could toddle and talk, I used to circumnavigate the table on a pair of very unseaworthy legs, and keep on saying, "I 'm so 'ungly, what shall I eat?" If blame is to be attached to any one, that one is Dame Nature, who blessed me with the means to attain the great end of five feet ten and a pair of broad shoulders.

From my own recollections though—I acknowledge the fact—I was a great—well, perhaps not "great," but constant—eater. At home I was nicknamed "Alderman Gobble;" at school, "The Wolf," "Lean-and-Hungry," "Old Voracity," "Silkworm," &c., &c.

The constancy of my eating, the incessant desire for food, I have looked upon in mature life from a scientific point of view "Darwinism!" I said to myself, triumphantly; "here in my own person is a proof of the truth of that great man's theory."

What proof? Why, behold it! Has not nature left in me the same constant desire for food that exists in the herbivora, which eat from the time of waking in the morning till they sleep at night?

But my object here is not to discuss science, only to relate fragments—should I not rather say, to piece together fragments?—of my early life. I confess it at once—the devouring element fired the whole of my youthful days; I lived to eat; my amusements took the form of preparing food, and my excursions always resolved themselves into a hunt for food.

One of my earliest recollections is that of being petted by a gentleman friend who kept late hours, and, after partaking of my breakfast, going up to his room to get into bed with him, stay till he dressed, and then joining him at breakfast, where the staple was invariably fine York ham.

In the course of the morning I used to be supplied with surreptitious slices of bread and butter, till the keenness of my scent betrayed the fact of meat roasting in the kitchen, to which I descended from the nursery, like a young vulture from on high, to be regaled on sop-in-the-pan—there were no patent kitcheners in those days—to grease my white diaper pinafore, and get into trouble and a clean one on re-ascending to my eyrie perch.

I dined at one precisely; after which, if it would only turn wet, and prevent my being marched like a prisoner into the enclosure at St. James's Park, I was safe for sundry other snacks in the kitchen. If it proved dry, the walk had to be taken, with the slight solace that I was allowed either a slice of bread, or a penny for a bun, to feed the ducks in the ornamental water. Ah! what a waste that seemed to me to be—throwing so much good bread upon the waters without a chance of its coming back to me in the shape of duck! The ducks did not get it all.

But to return to the wet days, when I could sneak down to the kitchen where the regular six o'clock dinner was being prepared. Apicius, great devourer of old! what treats I had given me by that grand woman, our cook! She used to kiss my four-year-old cheeks, and call me a cherub; hug me against the creaking busk of her stays until she hurt me; and in her lavish love cause me to partake of James's powder, and that delightful morning drink called *chez nous* "prune tea," composed of a French plum, boiled in an infusion of salts and senna—medicaments prescribed by my mother on account of the fevered symptoms I so often evinced.

But what of the physic, when I had such treats?—the scrap of currant and raspberry tart left from yesterday; the corner of jam open tart, with its crossings of pastry; the basin to scrape out in which cup custards had been made, with all that Judy had left behind; pieces of raw paste, which stuck to my pudgy fingers; bits of candied peel; currants and raisins; raw scraps of rhubarb; green gooseberries, plums, and greengages. Heavens! what a glorious digestion I must have had!

My greatest treat, though, was to be allowed to cook. The roasted snowball did not turn out a success, and I remember bellowing loudly—I had good lungs—because it was taken away from the fire in its basin when half done, and I perfectly well recollect what a quantity of dripping had run down its sides. Other feats of cooking on my part, though, were successes, notably the little puffs made with scraps of paste pinched off by Judy, in which would be enclosed half a dozen currants or a slice of apple; baked, too, in the oven—half baked, I should say, for my patience never, that I can remember, lasted to the proper pitch.

It might be supposed that I should have had no appetite for tea at five o'clock, but this would be an error. I used to partake most heartily of that meal, and be prepared then for a general touch up as to hands, face, and hair, ready for a descent to the dining-room, where, at dessert, my plate, knife and fork, purple and scarlet d'Oyley, and liqueur wineglass were always placed.

Apples, pears, oranges, peaches, nectarines, grapes, apricots, crystallized fruits, prunes, figs, almonds and raisins, and nuts, as they were in season, used to fall to my share along with my tiny glass of Madeira. What delights! what delicious Olympian food, with but one drawback—that I was not allowed to help myself! And now, how is it that one sits at table and leaves these delicacies untouched? What has become of childhood's zest in a fig? Gone for ever.

I may add here that bed was the next performance in those early days, for I was allowed no supper.

As I grew older, my experiments in cooking and eating were enlarged, and I can chronicle some of great success. I signally failed with the great baking pear, till taught to slice and bake it in a jar; but that codling apple, that was too sour to eat, was a wonderful thing when suspended from a nail in the nursery chimneypiece by a piece of twine tied to its stalk, and roasted before the fire. How it bubbled, and burst, and fizzed, and emitted jets of odorous steam, and oozings of soft apple, which were carefully scraped off with a spoon and eaten as they appeared—a trifle acid, but delicious in the extreme!

But the success here was not perfect; in fact, the whole of my cooking was marred by the same drawback—a want of patience to enable me to await the thorough cooking of my food.

As years passed on I experimented largely, and ate everything that came to hand: grass seed when green and growing; the young shoots of the hawthorn; the seed capsule of the mallow; the leaves of the barberry as well as its fruit when it appeared; all ordinary fruit in an unripe state as a matter of course, the more acid and wooden the better—in fact, gooseberries, when very green, are about the most convenient form of fruit I know for provender to stow in your trousers' pockets to eat at church. The only sound they give is a mild scraunch, where an apple would betray; cherries encumber you with stones; and currants or strawberries melt into mash.

But to continue my list. Hips from the dog-rose, haws from the hedges, and sloes from the blackthorn. In nuts I was a hero. I believe I am the only living being who can say that he ate a whole sixpenny cocoa-nut at one sitting without feeling a bit the worse for it. Barcelonas and filberts I never measured. Cashew-nuts I was not so partial to; but Brazils! How many times have I been corrected at home and abroad for cracking Brazils—"Brazzeels" we called them—in the hinges of the door!

I come now to more festive and experimental times. Did you ever eat roast sparrow? Perhaps so; but not cooked as I did cook. That sparrow was captured one very snowy day in a brick trap, which I had been watching till half frozen. I was spared the part of butcher by the little fellow being killed by the brick; but I plucked and dressed that bird most carefully. I singed him as I had seen fowls singed; I stuffed him with bread-crumbs, pepper, and a bit of butter; I sewed him up, skewered him with two stocking-needles and a bodkin (stolen from Judy's workbox), and I roasted him before the fire.

Reader, I have dined since then at many a grand "feed," but never with such an appetite, with such appreciation as of the delicious flavour of that exquisite bird! It was beyond description.

I will pass over my feats in this way at school, and the banquets we boys prepared and ate, at which I was *chef*, and furnished such delicacies as a couple of thrushes, a lark, and a blackbird. On one occasion, I own it with grief, one of the two sparrows I roasted was a robin. Then there was the moor-hen that would not be plucked, but had to be skinned; the pigeon caught in a rat-trap; the great treat of all — the partridge with a broken wing, which we hunted down and killed in a ditch. I, reader, was the *chef* who cooked all these, and we boys ate them darkly at dead of night, with halfpenny stale buns, and washed them down with Spanish liquorice-water, which we fondly compared to stout. I will not dwell on the potatoes I roasted, nor upon the failure I made with Samuel Lunn's little white rabbit with pink eyes, which died, although I lavished upon it all the resources of my art; but tell of how from that time I grew secretive, and being badly fed at school, launched into strange experiments to quell the demon that so often gnawed within.

Our school was in Essex, "pleasantly situated upon the borders of Epping Forest," so the advertisements said, and we boys had ample time on our hands for running wild in the wood. I availed myself of this to construct what I called my cavern, which was, however, only a hole in the side of a gravel-pit, just hidden from sight by a thick overgrowth of brambles. Robinson Crusoe never enjoyed himself one-half so well as did I in that hole, where, by degrees, I smuggled a few bricks, an old pail, a tinder-box and matches, a piece of iron hoop for a poker, and armsful of dried wood, and pockets-full of bits of coal.

I spent every hour I could get, away in that delightful solitude, fair weather or foul; and here I devised traps and caught the birds. Twice over I trapped a little rabbit, cooked him, and ate him—bah! *ate* does not express the banquet—feast—supreme delight—even though there was a good deal of wood-ash with the gravy. No boy shared my secret, for fear it should be betrayed; and here, when other game ran short, I tried my experiments. The first was upon a squirrel, which I knocked down with a stick as he was running from tree to tree, and the result was a delicious roast.

My next was upon a hedgehog, which took so large a fire that I was fearful of being betrayed, for I cooked him *à la zingaro;* that is, wrapped him, spines and all, in clay, and baked him in the ashes of the wood fire piled over him till done. Then you smash the clay, and out comes the luxurious little pig.

One day I caught a snake, and here I hesitated, contenting myself with hanging him up in the cavern; but though I had left the long lithe creature there, I had it with me in bed all night in dreams, and I awoke the next morning, determined to do as do the Indians. As soon as I could slip away, I ran off to my cavern, skinned the game like an eel, rolled him up, and skewered him whiting fashion, or rather like a fleshy Catherine wheel, and roasted him before a bonny blaze. I ate that fellow up, and picked the bones quite clean; and all I can say is, that he was not bad nor yet good.

I did not search for snakes, and the next I killed I threw away.

Snails next took my attention, for after a damp day they came out there in large numbers, and of so large a size, that I think I am right in saying that they were the large edible snail said to have been introduced by the Romans. I knew nothing then, only that I was hungry, and I used to feel vexed at seeing so many snails about, so easy to obtain, and yet not like the idea of eating them.

It took me a week to eat my first snail. First I studied their food, and found that it was always pleasant green leaves. Then I had to get over the thoughts of their sliminess, which I did by recalling that they were not so slimy as eels. Next day I compared them to oysters, to whelks, to mussels, to cockles, to periwinkles, and the result was always favourable; but still I hung back, even after telling myself that it must be better than snake; and in the interim I cooked and ate a rat, and the next day four mice, which I had smuggled away in my jacket pocket from Old Baldy's barn, where there had been a rat hunt—a regular *battue* amongst the rodents.

Rat is not bad, neither is mouse; they eat like squirrel sprinkled with musk, and I often used to trap them afterwards, and skin, roast, and eat them in my cave.

At last, one hungry half-holiday, when we had dined off suet dumplings, so called—but in which the suet was invisible—I ran off to the wood. It was a damp day, and I kicked over several snails as I went to light my fire, which was soon humming merrily, having been lit with an old Mavor's spelling, and being assisted by a piece of broken form. Then I looked at all my traps, and found that one had contained a little rabbit; but I was too late, for a polecat had been before me, and left nothing but a few scraps of blood-stained fur.

What was to be done? I was half famished, and began to chew bits of hazel twig, and—well, I may as well own it—cry, and think about running away from school and going to sea, when—Scrunch!

I had trodden upon a snail.

In a few minutes I had a dozen fine ones in my cap, with which I ran to the cave, and rattled them into an old fire-shovel. The fire had burnt down into one bright glow, without a vestige of smoke, and in a sort of desperate fit I held the shovel over, frying-pan fashion.

Cizzle—fizz—spit—sputter—crack! They soon began to cook, the wet sliminess disappeared in steam, and before long they seemed to have half dried up in their shells, and to be done.

At this stage I emptied them on to the piece of tin which served me as a plate, took out my pocket knife, and the wooden lemon which held my salt. Next came the crust of bread which I had smuggled rom the dinner-table, and began to eat.

—The bread, not the snails.

In fact, I went on nibble, nibble, nibble, at the hard dry crust, until it was nearly all gone.

Still I did not touch the snails!

"Why don't they take me away from this horrible school?" I thought; and then I recalled how they said I always looked so rosy and well. "Ah! they should see the other boys!" I said, and I thought of the sallow, miserable-looking little fellows, ill taught, badly fed, and dejected.

Just then I took up a snail, and tried it with the point of my knife, put it down again, and finished my bread. Then, not feeling so hungry, I sat and looked at the repast which I had cooked, till stung up to desperation, as I had been often enough over that filthy jalap at school, I made a wry face, pulled out my snail easily enough, sprinkled him with salt, and ate him!

In a moment I had eaten the second; before a minute had expired I had eaten the lot, and was out in the forest paths seeking for more; and from that day to this I have eaten snails, which, let the reader bear in mind, are looked upon as a delicacy in Paris, even as are the next dish I tried, namely, frogs.

Somehow, frogs were a failure. I never could get them in sufficient quantity to be of use, but what there is of them is no bad food. The worst of them is that they are mere hollow shams; for, saving the legs and thighs, the eater finds but little for his satisfaction.

Mushrooms, though, were one of my great delights, but only in the autumn; and these had their drawbacks; for when I say mushrooms, I mean those which grow abundantly in Epping Forest, and are known as toadstools. The drawbacks were that I suffered for my experiments, and three times made myself dangerously ill by eating poisonous kinds; but experience taught me what to avoid, and in September and October I could always pick a dish and prepare a savoury fry, that made my nostrils exult. In November, too, there was a pale leathery-coloured fellow that grew plentifully amongst the fallen leaves, with the under part covered with tiny spikes. I used to call it the currycomb mushroom, and saving that it was rather tough, I found it delicious and wholesome. That and a golden orange fellow, which I found in the green moss amongst the hazels earlier in the year, made me many a fry, and I have since found that my boy's discrimination had led me to choose the *Hydnum* and the *Chantarelle*, kinds in capital odour amongst the fungus-eaters of our land.

Strange times those were, when school inspectors had not been dreamed of, and there was more than one Wackford Squeers in the land; but, in spite of my strange foods, does it occur to the reader that, after all, that which we eat and drink is to a great extent a matter of custom? Let them be unknown in our list of edibles, and then let some one introduce to notice, as good for food, the hare, the eel, the oyster, the periwinkle, the crab, the turtle, and the pig,—what would be the verdict of the many?

Perhaps the reader will not be surprised to hear that I favour the proceedings of the Acclimatization Society, and that quite lately I have eaten eland and believe in kangaroo!

Geo. Manville Fenn.

A PIG'S TALE.

FATHER JAMES was an excellent monk.
He was never suspected of getting drunk;
And at girls he decidedly never wunk,
As some of the monks at times did.
He was one of the very best of cooks,
And read in the inmost Refectory nooks
Dame Glasse's and Demoiselle Acton's books,
And all their receipts into rhymes did.

But though not given to flirt or swig,
He had *one* little weakness—or, rather, big!—
He doated—he downright doated on pig—
From chitterling right to crackling;
And at times when matins he had to say,
His thoughts were a little apt to stray
In search of the best and most succulent way
Of some pigly portion tackling.

One day while his path he chanced to pick,
Where the mast was lying deep and thick,
His heart (or stomach) was touched to the quick
At sight of a luscious porker.
A pig with a cheek that was fat and wide,
A pig with a mighty expanse of side,
A pig that would crackling largely provide—
In short, a regular corker!

Poor Father James could not help but sigh,
As the swine he eyed with a loving eye,
Nor knew there was hid in a bush hard by
The King of the Elves and Fairies,
Who nightly danced the turf into rings,
And knotted the cobwebs into swings,
Those funny, freakish, fanciful things,
That with mortals play vagaries.

Now, the pig whereon Father James had set
His gluttonous heart was the royal pet,
Which made the Fairydom monarch get
In a furious towering passion;
And he swore by The Acorn and Nightingale—
(An oath which to keep he dared not fail)—
That this greedy monk he would assail,
And punish in fearful fashion.

So he summoned his fays of all degrees,
And on Father James he bade them seize,
And—as monarchs always have what they please—
They quickly brought him the Father.
And soon the unfortunate friar's head
From his fat old shoulders was sharply shred,
And they clapped on him that of a pig instead,
Which was inconvenient, rather.

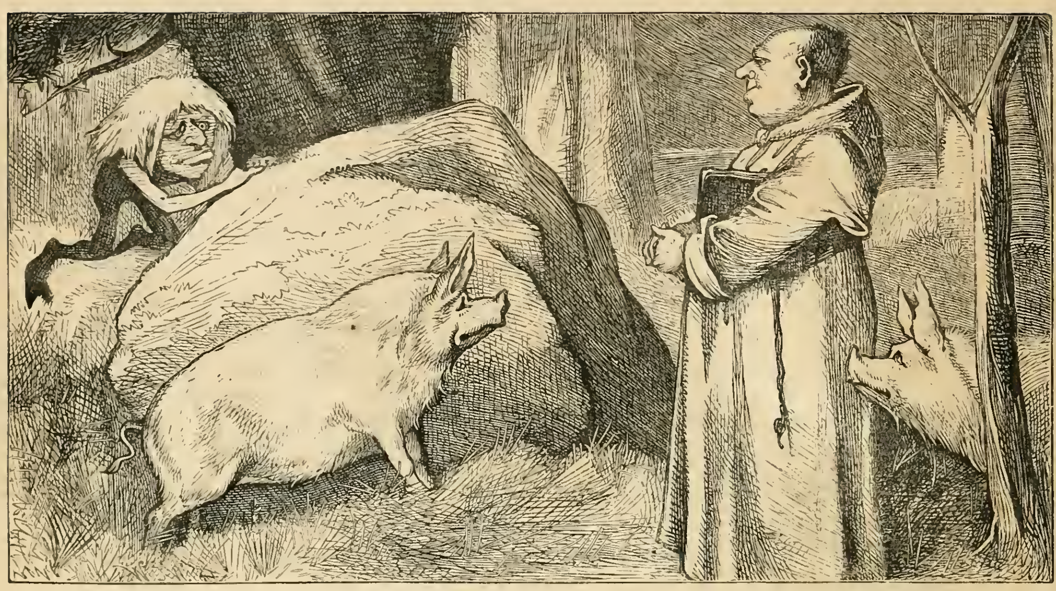
And when Father James recovered the brunt,
He tried to protest against the affront,
But all he could utter was just a grunt,—
Not a pleasant way of speaking.
He felt inclined at the change to cry,
A tear rolled out of his little round eye,
And he strove—he struggled to heave a sigh,
But it only sounded like squeaking.

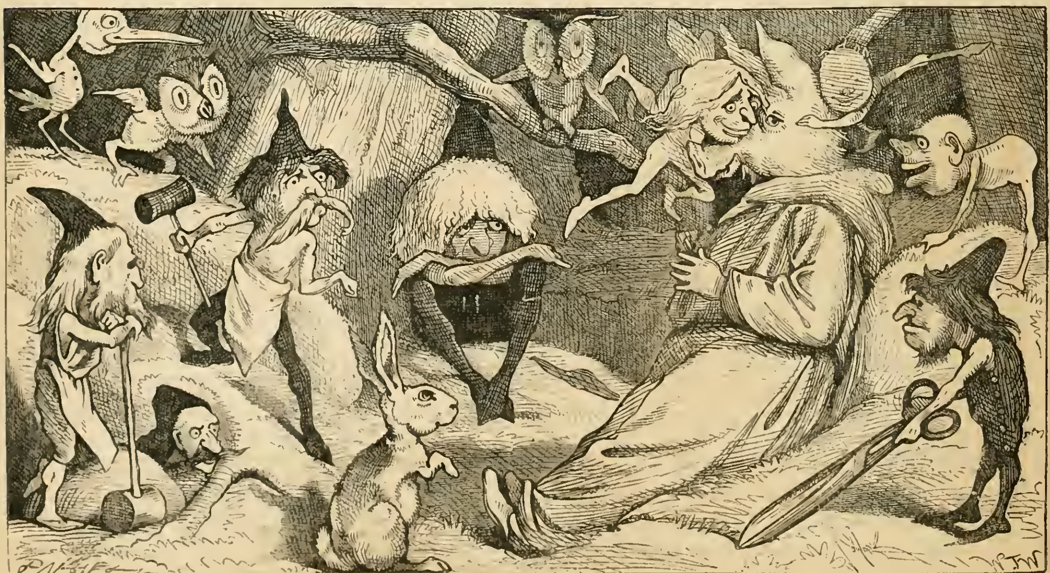
And when to the convent he took his way,
He filled his brother monks with dismay—
"Can this be good Father James?" cried they.
But he didn't answer the question;
For just at that moment he groaned, and woke
From a dream, that was not at all a joke,
But such as surfeits of pork can provoke—
The anguish of indigestion.

Father James took a hermit's cell near Cork,
And gave up plying his knife and fork
Upon ribs and chines and quarters of pork,
And all such savoury messes.
Instead of unwholesome dishes like these,
He took to beans and to grey split peas,
With a frugal repast (when it didn't freeze)
Of plain cold water and cresses.

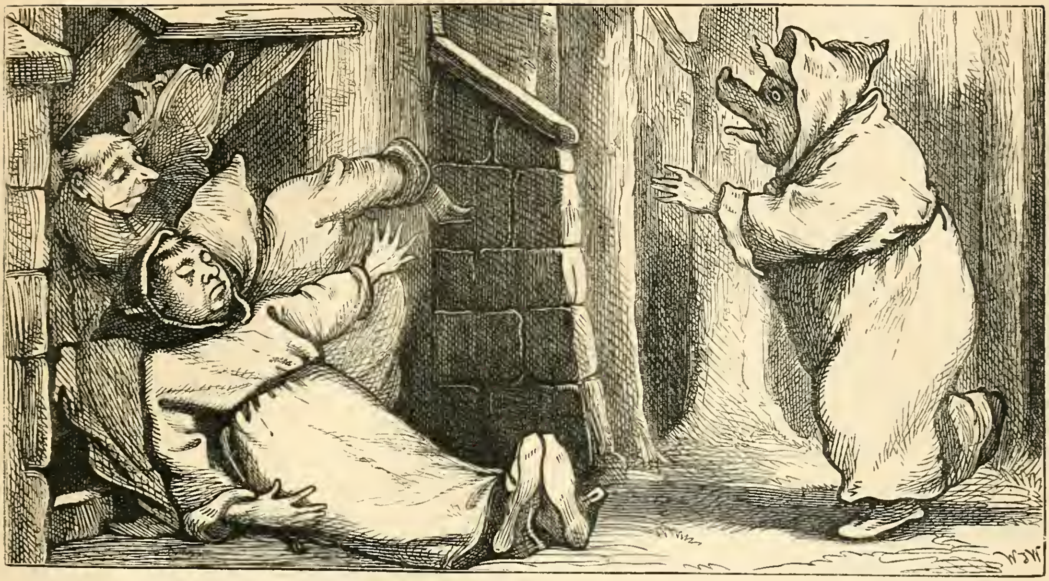
T. H.

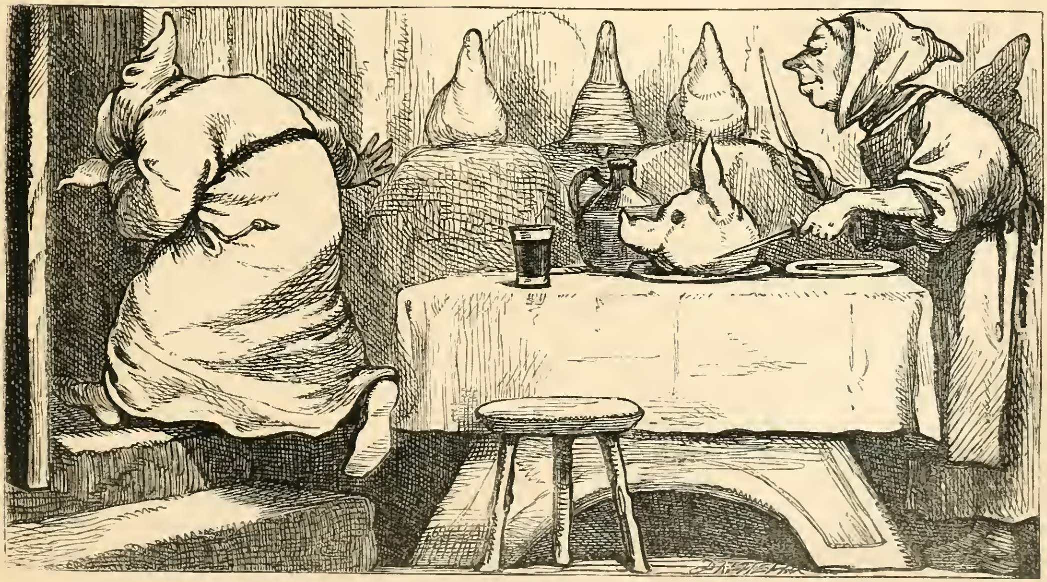
A PIG'S TALE.





A PIG'S TALE.





A SLIGHT MISTAKE.

MY brother and I are twins. There can be no mistake about that, for our likeness to each other is so great that it is positively unpleasant to our friends and ourselves. The celebrated Corsican Brothers were not more alike than we are: that is, as far as personal appearance goes; beyond that Jim and I are utterly dissimilar. For instance: I am fond of trade, Jim hates it; I have a great dislike to horse-racing, Jim dotes upon what he pleases to call "the Turf;" I avoid danger to such an extent that I have heard some uncharitable people call my caution cowardice; now, nothing pleases my brother better than running risks; I am quiet and peaceable to a fault, while Jim is always up to mischief and constantly in hot water; in a word, two creatures more alike in features and unlike in character never existed.

Of course this likeness caused us no end of trouble. Many and many a time I have had to answer for Jim's faults. If he robbed the orchard, I was sure to be beaten for it, although I detested unripe fruit, and therefore could not share in the plunder for which I had to pay the penalty.

For all that, we were the best of friends, and always ready to assist each other in any way we could, and, in spite of all the annoyances, never quarrelled.

At the age of fourteen Jim and I were apprenticed to a butterman, who resided at Acton. Of course I was the master's favourite, for I stuck well to business, whilst Jim spent all his leisure time with the men from the training stables, and took more interest in making up a betting-book than in serving the customers. When we had served our time I determined to start in business, and asked my brother to join me, but he would not listen to my proposal.

"No, no, Dick," he said; "I've done with butter and bacon for ever—that is, except for breakfast or tea. I intend going in for horse-racing. I have already put a few pounds on the Derby, and am now busy making up a book for Ascot."

In vain I tried to persuade him to give up the idea; he was determined, and when Jim had made up his mind, nothing could make him alter it. I was very sorry, for I looked upon Jim as entirely lost; for, in my opinion, betting meant bankruptcy, both in cash and honour. However, I trusted that Jim would soon see the folly of his ways, and would be glad to join me in my shop. I pictured to myself the happiness I should feel when that moment arrived (for that my shop would fail never entered my thoughts, more than it did that Jim would ever make a fortune by betting, as he has since done), and became almost anxious for the news that my brother had lost his money.

It was a proud day for me when I first opened my shop in High Street, Whitechapel; my bosom heaved with delight at the sight of my first customer, who, by the way, only bought an ounce of butter; but it was the commencement of the gigantic trade I intended to do, and therefore I was happy. As the day advanced my trade increased, and at night when I counted the contents of my till, I found that I had every reason to congratulate myself, and, therefore, in a luckless hour determined to smoke a pipe and have a glass in the parlour of a neighbouring public house. Accordingly, I put on my hat and started off, and in a few minutes I was comfortably seated in the snug parlour, puffing my tobacco and quaffing my ale.

The company was neither numerous nor select, being mostly composed of butchers, a set of men of whom I have rather a horror—I don't know why. They are a highly useful and, I have no doubt, honest set of men; but all people have their antipathies, and butchers are one of mine. However, I disguised my feelings, and joined in the conversation, hoping thereby to make myself agreeable to the company, amongst whom were many of my neighbours.

How I did it I cannot tell, but, by some means, I managed to offend a big, hulking fellow, who I recognized as the owner of a butcher's shop exactly facing my establishment. I tried all I could to soothe the monster, but he glared at me like an ogre, and made such very strong remarks that I thought it better to keep silent, hoping thereby to let the storm blow over. Vain hope! the butcher being unable to speak *to* me, in consequence of my silence, vented his malice by speaking *at* me. He complained about tradesmen opening new shops in opposition to the old ones; declared that he had been made quite sick by some bad butter he had seen that day; and hoped, when the inspector of weights and measures visited the neighbourhood, that he would look after some shopkeepers in particular, for he, Mr. Grote, had watched one fellow tampering with his weights and scales all day.

I knew he meant me, for I certainly had amused myself in the intervals of serving my customers by polishing up my scales and weights, and as I saw by their looks that the company knew that the wretch intended me, I had no help for it but to reply.

"Sir," said I, in the most conciliatory manner possible, "I am exceedingly sorry that I should have unwittingly offended you, as it appears I have done; but I cannot fail to see that your observations are evidently intended for me."

"If the cap fits, you may wear it," grinned the brute. "I shan't mention names, to give any one the opportunity of getting the law of me: I ain't so green."

"The cap does not fit," I replied, "for I beg to say that my butter is excellent, my scales just, and that all your accusations are entirely false."

With a howl of rage, the brute sprang from his seat and dashed his pipe in my face. Luckily, two of his companions seized him, so that I was able to make my escape from the room; but as I fled I could hear him vociferating, "Come on, you coward—let me go—yah! you cur!" and so on, until I had left the house.

From that moment my life was one of misery. That horrid wretch Grote would not let me alone: he teazed me morning, noon, and night, until I became the laughingstock of the neighbourhood, and consequently my trade fell off until ruin seemed to stare me in the face. My neighbours avoided me as if I had the plague, and some even went so far as to join the butcher in annoying me, so that at last I became frightened to go out, and passed my evenings in the little parlour behind my shop, making up my books.

One night whilst I was so engaged a ring came at the bell. I opened the door, and a man clad in a long cloak, the collar of which was turned up so as to conceal his face, rushed into the passage, a proceeding I no sooner remarked than I immediately prepared to rush out into the street, for I cannot bear burglars; but before I could execute my purpose the fellow caught me by the shoulder, and, in tones that froze my very blood, whispered in my ear,

"Don't be a fool, Dick: come in and shut the door, or I shall be seized."

"Jim!" I stammered. "Why, what is the matter?"

"Shut the door and come into the parlour; then I will tell you."

I did as he commanded, and then waited impatiently for the explanation of this sudden and mysterious visit.

"Phew!" said Jim, as he threw off his cloak; "I 've had a narrow escape."

"But how have you had an escape? and from what have you escaped?"

"Dick, I am ruined!" cried my brother, throwing himself into a chair. "I backed the wrong horse for the St. Leger, and have lost all my money."

"I knew you would, Jim," I said; "I knew you would. But it 's no use crying over spilt milk, as the proverb says: you must come and share with me, though Heaven knows that I have not much to offer you, for that horrid butcher has nearly ruined me."

"You 're a good fellow, Dick; but I have worse news still. You must know that I had a thousand pounds placed in my hands to buy horses for a gentleman. So convinced was I that Vanderdecken would win this race, that I not only put *my* money on him, but also that which I had in trust. I have lost all, and have had to fly to avoid the police."

This frightful news so overcame me that I could only wring my hands and exclaim, "Oh, what is to be done? what is to be done?"

"This is what must be done," said Jim, in a hurried whisper: "you must take my clothes and my name, and I will take yours in exchange; you must go down to Acton to my rooms, and I will carry on your business here. Do you see?"

"Yes, I see; but the police may arrest me by mistake."

"Of course they will; that 's the beauty of the thing. I expect to make a hatful of money over the next race, and when I have done that I shall show up, declare that the whole affair has been a mistake, either pay the thousand pounds or buy the horses; you will be released, and can bring an action for damages for false imprisonment."

"Yes, that 's all very well, Jim; but suppose you should not win all this money?

"Nonsense, my dear fellow; I *must* win it. It 's as safe as the bank."

"Yes, but so was Vanderdecken."

"Oh, bother Vanderdecken! I tell you I must win; besides, should I fail, I bolt over to France; then you prove your identity, they must release you, and *there* you are."

"Yes; but in the meantime I shall be in prison."

"Not necessarily: you must keep close, and then perhaps they may not find you. I will give you a letter to my friend, Bob Kirby—you are sure to find him at the 'Bit and Bridle'—and he will tell you what to do. You must not write to me here. Bob will do all the writing, and let you know how things are going. Now, come and let us change clothes; there is not a moment to lose, or you will be too late for the train."

"But my business?" I gasped, for I did not like the job at all.

"Oh! I can take care of that: you know I understand the trade."

"But the butcher?"

"I must put up with him, I suppose," said Jim, looking rather blue. "Of course it is not pleasant, but nothing is in this world, and as you have stood his insults for so long a time, I suppose I shall be able to bear it for a little while. There is the letter; now off with your clothes and put on mine."

How Jim did it I can't say, but in less than a quarter of an hour I was dressed in his clothes and turned out of my own house.

I crept along the road trembling at the sight of a policeman, and wondering at the little notice they took of me. I reached the train in safety, and arrived in Acton without being arrested.

I found the "Bit and Bridle" and Bob Kirby, to whom I delivered the letter. He read it, and at once took me to Jim's rooms, advising me not to move therefrom if I valued my liberty. Need I say that I felt very uncomfortable, and obeyed his orders to to the letter?

On the second night after my arrival in Acton, Mr. Kirby came to my rooms and told me I must prepare to start for London at once.

"You must take care you are not seen," he continued; "for if you were caught now, things would be very awkward. Tell Jim he must come down here at once: he had better walk down, for the trains may be watched. If he can get down without being seen, all will be well; but if not, I fear they will try to make it a case of conspiracy."

Oh, how bitterly I repented having consented to leave my butter-shop! for, all things considered, the police were to me worse than the butcher. By keeping myself a strict prisoner in my own house, I could avoid the butcher; but there was no safety from the police.

With a beating heart I crept up to my own shop, and knocked gently at the door, which was opened directly by Jim, to whom I delivered my dreadful message.

"I must be off at once, Dick," he said: "we must change clothes directly! You will be all right, for I have made every one believe I was you. I make a capital tradesman after all. I 've sent your business up wonderfully!"

"I 'm very glad to hear it, Jim; I 'm sure it needed it. But how about the butcher?"

"Oh, he has been a great nuisance, certainly; but look here, Dick: don't you be half so easy with him. I don't believe he has half the pluck he pretends to have."

"I do—I *know* it!" was my rueful answer; "but if the business is improving, I shall try to put up with the annoyance."

"That's right, Dick! And, now, good bye! I'm much obliged to you for what you have done. If any of the girls say you made love to them, you will know that I am the culprit—only don't you say so, but keep the fun up. It's not disagreeable work, I can assure you. Ha! ha! ha! nobody would believe you if you were to swear it was me! So good bye, and take care of yourself!"

With a hearty laugh Jim went on his road; and I, with a sad heart, sought my bed.

I arose very early the next morning and took down the shutters, so as to avoid meeting that horrid butcher. A few minutes afterwards a very pretty girl came fluttering into the shop, and, with many a pretty smile and simper, purchased half a pound of best fresh butter.

"Why, how dull you are this morning, Mr. Perkins!" she exclaimed, with a pretty sly glance.

"Dull?" I replied, in a dreamy manner.

"Oh, nonsense!" she cried, "it is no good putting on that modest air, after the way you behaved yesterday. Do you know, when you first came here, we all thought you such a sneak—at least, most of us did; but I always said that you were not so demure as you wished to make out—and the way you snatched that kiss from me yesterday proves it!"

"So," thought I, "that is the way Master Jim has been improving my business, is it?"

I looked at the little rosy mouth, and could not blame him—nay, I ventured to follow his example, and did so with the greatest success.

"Do you know," said the young lady, putting her arms on the counter—"do you know I have liked you ever since you thrashed that big bully, Grote the butcher?"

"What!" I exclaimed, in amazement, "thrashed Grote?"

"Of course you did, when he came over here swearing he would pull your nose! Oh, I did like the cool way in which you went to meet him, and knocked him down. It was *splendid!*"

Could it be possible? Had my twin brother thrashed the butcher, and left me to reap the glory? As if to confirm my suspicions, at that very instant Grote appeared in his shop—and, oh, his face!! It was one mass of bruises! I stepped out on to the pavement to have a look at him closer. On seeing me he bowed politely, but I merely shook my fist at him, and he retreated rapidly.

I cannot describe how my business increased from that day, and all through Jim's boldness and lightheartedness. During the day I received a letter from my dear brother, in which he informed me that he had not lost his money; but having heard of my misery, he invented this little plot to save me.

I have now several large shops. Jim has never joined me, he having retired from the turf, and become a gentleman farmer. I am married, and have a large family. My eldest boy is about to marry Miss Grote, Grote having become very good friends with me, and, what is better, *very rich.* But, good friends as we are, I have never thought it worth my while to inform him of his *slight mistake.*

ALFRED R. PHILLIPS.

SAINT OR SINNER?

ONCE the painter strove for ever upward—
Spurned earth's failure, aimed at heaven's completeness,
Soaring skyward as on seraph's pinions—
Aimed not just to reproduce a landscape,
Peasant figures filling-in the foreground,
Wax-and-honey women picking posies,
Sailors drinking on the roofs of taverns,
Models grouped for scenes in play or story!
Painting now is far too photographic,

And the brush allows the lens is rival!
Those old painters saw the heavens opened—
Saw the new Jerusalem, and saw there
Saints in phalanx fading into distance,
Over-hovered by unnumbered cherubs.
Could the camera compete with those men—
Fra Angelico—Andréa even—
Or that king of men, my prince of painters,
'Toloméo Estebán Murillo?"

So discoursed our hero Dick Chevalley,
By the fireside of his splendid studio,
In his velvet jacket broadly braided
Up the seams with mystic convolutions,
Gordian knots from wristband up to elbow,
Velvet slippers richly silk-embroidered,
Fez of scarlet on his locks of raven.
So he spoke, inhaling and outbreathing
In the intervals blue rings of vapour
From the bowl, with perfumed stem of cherry,
Wherein glowed the rarest Latakia,
With a pinch of Cavendish besprinkled,
To combine a flavour with a fragrance.
We in semicircle sat around him,
His disciples, puffing cigaritos,
Though a pipe apiece lurked in our pockets!
But to smoke our mere returns or bird'seye
Seemed to us a sort of desecration
In his presence, 'mid his studio's grandeur.
Grand it was in glory mediæval
Touched in parts with the luxurious modern;—
True! on silver dogs the fire was builden,
But before it lay a Turkish hearth-rug
Much more cosy than a strew of rushes.
Dimly lit it was, with tall wax tapers,
Slightly reminiscent of an altar.
Gas was none—the eye, that on the canvas
Daylong wearies, cannot bear the flicker.
But within the studio's dim recesses
Every taper had his special star-beam,
Glinting back from some old suit of armour,
Glass of Venice, glaze of earthen vessel,
Or of metal casket deftly hammered.

He was great, our hero, Dick Chevalley—
Always on the line on those May Mondays,
Visitor of nobles, and receiving
Calls from dealers—men "who had their prices,"
Which were never shorter than three figures.
"'Toloméo Estebán Murillo,"
Dick continued, rolling o'er his palate
Every syllable, as would a Spaniard
Roll the *olla* that smacks well of garlick.
"'Toloméo Estebán Murillo—
Ah, dear boys, he was indeed a painter!
'T was with 'blood and milk' they said he painted,
Not meguilp or any other modern medium!
Blood and milk! The milk for neck and forehead,
And the blood for lips and cheeks so tender,
Where it blushed beneath the finer tissues.
Ah, his Virgins with the Holy Infant,
His St. Johns—how exquisitely painted!
There's the painter—winging ever upward,
With a soul in rapture of devotion,
Day and night in a divine communion
With the company of saints and angels—
Even, mind you, at his frugal meal-time.
For his masterpiece, in my opinion,
Is that Virgin with the Holy Infant
Painted on a common dinner-napkin
While he was residing at the convent
Of the Capuchins, to paint them frescoes
For their chapel, in his birthplace, Seville.
Cannot you imagine how the painter,
Rising hastily from simple viands,
With his soul possessed of inspiration,
Hurried to the homely cell allotted
For his studio—seized the brush and palette—
Would not lose his thought to find a canvas—
Nailed up on the rough-hewn door the napkin
He had brought, unthinking, from the table—
Fixed thereon the image of his vision,
Turned the vision into a creation.
Still it lives—the Virgin, thoughtful, tender,
With her maiden innocence for halo,
And the Babe, with earnest eyes, who struggles—
So it seems—from out the frame, as knowing
He must do the Father's work, and struggled
To accomplish it, and crown the mercy.
Ah, he was indeed a sacred painter,
'Toloméo Estebán Murillo!"

Thus Chevalley, while we awestruck listened,
Rather proud to smoke the cigaritos,
Making us seem kindred to that Spaniard,
'Toloméo Estebán Murillo,
Though in truth these selfsame cigaritos
Were imported—or they lied—from Russia!

Only—finishing the semicircle,
Sitting opposite to Dick Chevalley,—
Libriverm, the gaunt and cynic student,
Smoked his pipe, and sneered at cigaritos.
London straws, he said, and navvy's baccy—
Give him those!—the children might smoke paper.
So he sat there puffing like a furnace,
As his custom was when he dissented,
And—for he dissented nearly always—
He, like Jove, lived in a cloud for ever.
Thence, when Dick was silent, forth a voice came:
"'Toloméo Estebán Murillo
Was not quite so gracious as you paint him:

Just your ordinary sort of painter,
Working honestly to get him money,
Painting Saints because it was the market—
Would as soon have painted you Bacchantes
If he felt quite sure of the commission;
Lived about two centuries ago, too:
Sort of painter you can praise with safety.
If they skied your picture to admit him,
'Blood and milk' would change to 'blood and thunder!'—
'Blood and milk!' You've been to Spain? 'No!' Bless me!—
Well, you've seen his portrait? Not that either!—
He's a forehead, grant you; but refinement,
Such as communes with your saints and angels,
Lacks completely. Full lips, ripe and ruddy;
And that fatty bag beneath the eyebrow—
You know what I mean—your 'blood and milk,' now,
Is the thing in which to paint his portrait:
Blood—the animality that warmed him;
Milk—the luxury he took delight in.
Milk's a luxury in countries, mind you,
Where, for want of better, that thin goat's whey,
Innocent of cream, is milk reputed!
Then his Saints, and Virgin with the Infant,
Brother Lawrence, or the Convent Barber,
And Pepita with the little José.
John the Baptist one of those same street-boys:
Ragged beggars hunting for—musquitos,
Playing knuckle-bone; the boys he painted
Better far than Virgins, saints, or angels,
Not in New Jerusalem he found them!
As for humble fare and lenten victual—
Never fear! he dined as any prince might;
Some lay brother, told off for the service,
Brought his viands to his own apartment.
He was born in Seville—you've not seen it!
Then, as the saw says, have missed a marvel;
Which, as I interpret—seeing Seville
Famous is for oranges and women—
Is the marvel that the women's faces
And the oranges are like in colour.
Never been in Spain, and you a painter!
Whence then came this mandolin, old fellow?"

So he spoke: and, lazily up-reaching,
Took the mandolin and screwed the pegs up,
Touched with skilful thumb the chords, and chanted
To a strain irregular but tuneful:

"The painter, in his chair reclined,
Pushed back his plate, and sighed contented;
And, having gloriously dined,
Lay-brother Thomas complimented.

"We little knew of banquet-joys,
Old fellow, when we two were boys
About the streets here.
I never dreamt my brush would gain
Me riches and repute in Spain,
Or you would to such skill attain
As prove these meats here.

"And yet the times were jolly too—
We had our pleasures, I and you!
Your eye still twinkles
At thought of that! come, take a drink—
'Here's wine and woman'—yes, I think
I've seen you at Paquita wink,
Despite your wrinkles!

"Yes—yes! and Nita down the town,
A lissome damsel, olive-brown,
I've seen you eye her.
She'd like a pair of ear-rings, eh?
A brooch—some trinket in that way:—
Suppose you could, old fellow,—say,
Would you supply her?

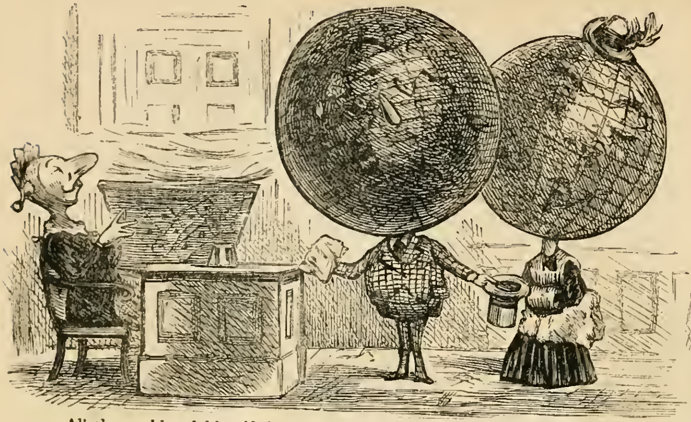
"Give me that napkin—in a trice
I'll paint you something shall suffice
To buy her twenty!
A Virgin and a child, eh? Well,
It's just the sort of thing to sell—
You'll quickly have, as I can tell,
Good bidders plenty.

"See there! it's done—go, have your wish;
To-night I want an extra dish—
Of course I sup here;
Some dainty dish, where you excel—
And if—come closer while I tell—
If some one—in your ear, friend!—well,
You'll send her up here!"

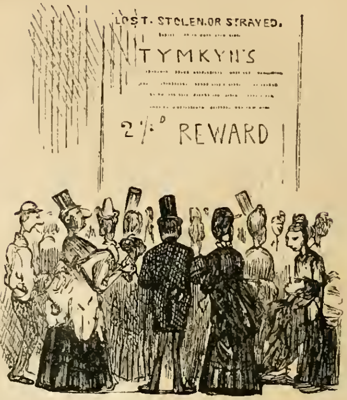
Libriverm broke off—a silence took us.
And in silence before long departed.
What's the fact? Where find the truth, I wonder?
In the rhapsodies of Dick Chevalley
Or in Libriverm's grim explanation?
Not in one, I think, nor in the other—
Somewhere intermediate, I fancy.
Man that's gifted with a golden genius
Is not wholly saint or wholly sinner—
Just a man. At least that's my conclusion.

IGNOTUS.

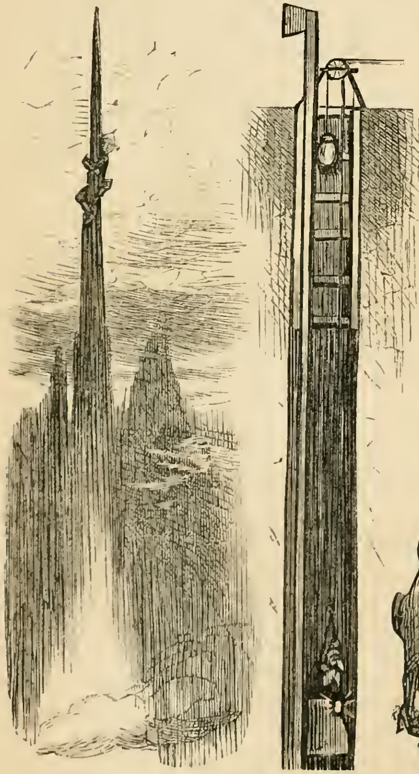
MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF TYMKYNS.



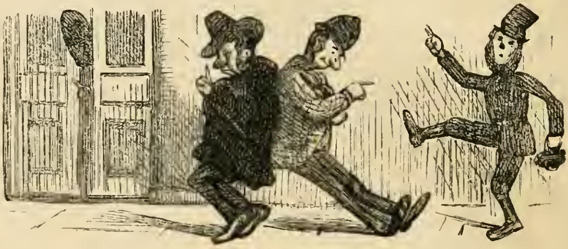
All the world and his wife have been asking what has become of Tymkyns.


LOST. STOLEN.OR STRAYED.
TYMKYN'S
2/-D REWARD

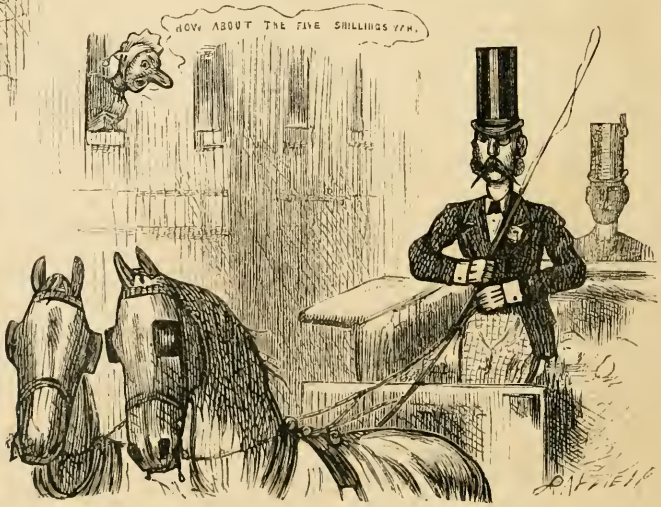
The last time we saw him he borrowed money of us—the scoundrel.



We looked everywhere or him

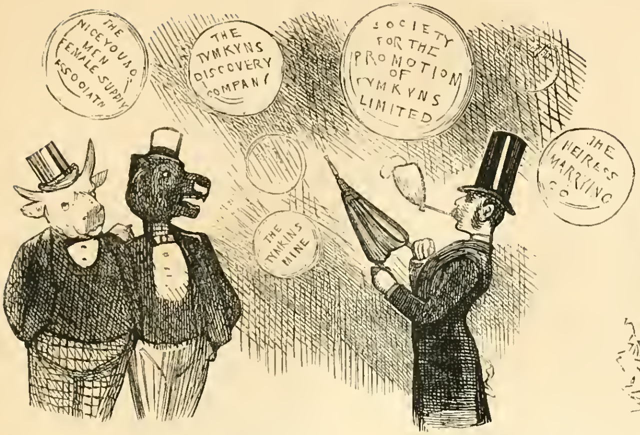


To say nothing of putting the police on his track.

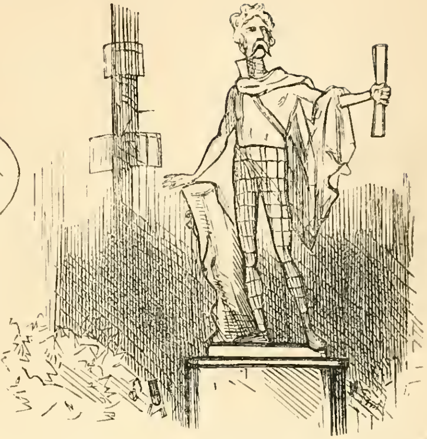

HOW ABOUT THE FIVE SHILLINGS YAH.

One day who should we see pass but——

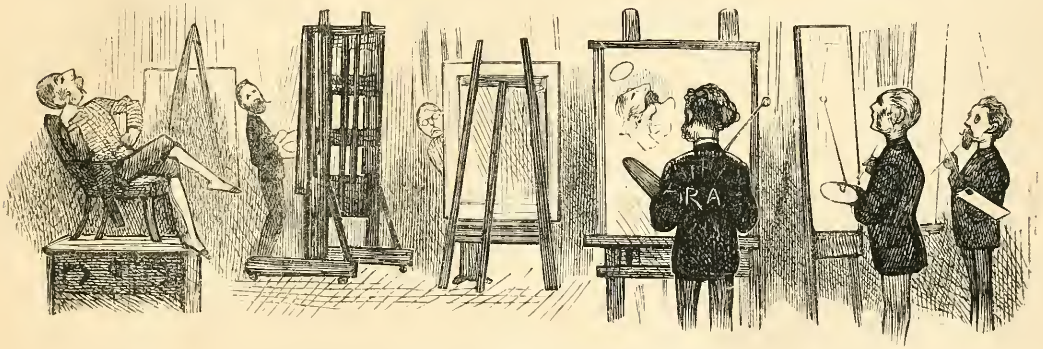
A STARTLING DISCOVERY.


THE NICEYOUNG MEN FEMALE SUPPLY ASSOCIATN
THE TYMKYNS DISCOVERY COMPANY
SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF TYMKYNS LIMITED
THE HEIRESS MARRYING CO
THE TYMKINS MINE

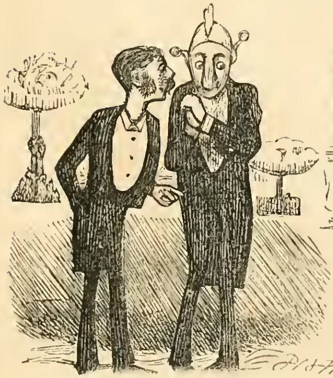
No longer Tymkyns, if you please. Fitzdiddlum & Co., Promoters and Public Benefactors. Clever fellow, Tymkyns.



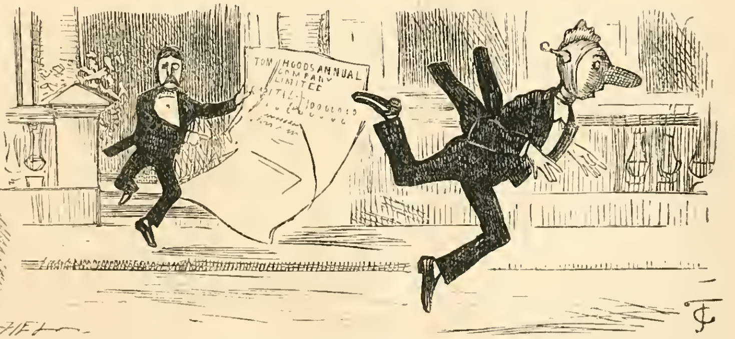
This great and good man had even presented his statue to his country,



And then became a munificent patron of Art, &c., &c., &c.



"Be a Joint Stock Company (Limited), old boy," said he.


TOM HOODS ANNUAL COMPANY LIMITED
CAPITAL £100000

"Not if we know it," said we. We have not seen him since, and have heard nothing about the five shillings we lent him.

A NAUTICAL NOVELTY.

THIS ship was named the *Camel.* In some respects she was an extraordinary vessel. She measured six hundred tons; but when she had taken in enough ballast to keep her from upsetting like a shot duck, and was provisioned for a three months' voyage, her crew had to come aboard without anything in their pockets: a moderately-heavy jack-knife, or a screw of tobacco, would have sunk her in a minute. On one of her voyages, just as she was about to leave port, a boat rowed alongside with two passengers, a man and his wife. They had booked the day before, but had remained ashore to get one more decent meal before committing themselves to the "briny cheap," as the man called the ship's fare. The woman came aboard, and the man was preparing to follow, when the captain leaned over the side and saw him.

"Well," said the captain, "what do *you* want?"

"What do *I* want?" said the man, laying hold of the ladder. "I 'm a-going to New York in this here ship—that 's what I want."

"Not with all that fat on you," roared the captain. "You don't weigh an ounce less than eighteen stone, and I 've got to have in my anchor yet. You wouldn't have me leave the anchor, I suppose?"

The man said he did not care about the anchor—never did like anchors anyhow; but if the ship would wait a bit, he would drink a cruet of vinegar, and reduce his flesh. One of the sailors finally threw him a cork jacket, and when he had put it on, the captain let him come aboard, but warned him that if he was caught eating anything during the voyage he would be handed over to the butcher.

This was Captain Abersouth, formerly of the *Mudlark*—as good a seaman as ever sat at the masthead reading a three-volume novel. Nothing could equal this man's passion for literature. For every voyage he laid in so many bales of novels that there was no stowage for the cargo. There were novels in the hold, and novels betweendecks, and novels in the saloon, and in the passengers' beds.

The *Camel* had been designed and built by her owner, an architect in the City, and she looked about as much like a ship as Noah's Ark did. She had bay windows and a verandah; a cornice and doors at the water-line. These doors had knockers and servants' bells. There had been a futile attempt at an area. The passenger saloon was on the upper deck, and had a tile roof. To this humplike structure the ship owed her name. Her designer had erected several churches—that of St. Ignotus is still used as a brewery in Hotbath Meadows—and, possessed of the ecclesiastic idea, had given the *Camel* a transept; but, finding this impeded her passage through the water, he had it removed. This weakened the vessel amidships. The mainmast was something like a steeple. It had a weathercock. From this spire the eye commanded one of the finest views in England.

Such was the *Camel* when I joind her in 1864 for a voyage of discovery to the South Pole. The expedition was under the auspices of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Fair Play. At a meeting of this excellent association, it had been "resolved" that the partiality of science for the North Pole was an invidious distinction between two objects equally meritorious; that Nature had marked her disapproval of it in the case of Sir John Franklin and many of his imitators; that it served them very well right; that this enterprise should be undertaken as a protest against the spirit of undue bias; and, finally, that no part of the responsibility or expense should devolve upon the society in its corporate character, but any individual member might contribute to the fund if he was fool enough. It is only common justice to say that none of them were. The *Camel* merely parted her cable one day while I happened to be on board—drifted out of the harbour southward, followed by the execrations of all who knew her, and could not get back. In two months she had crossed the equator, and the heat began to grow insupportable.

Suddenly we were becalmed. There had been a fine breeze up to three o'clock in the afternoon, and the ship had made as much as two knots an hour, when without a word of warning the sails began to belly the wrong way, owing to the impetus the ship had acquired; and then, as this expired, they hung down as lifeless as the skirts of a clawhammer coat. The *Camel* not only lay stock-still, but went a little backward. Motion was dead in the water; the winds were watching by the corpse. Old Ben, the boatswain, said "he 'd never knowed but one deader calm," and that, he explained, was when Preacher Jack, the reformed sailor, had got excited in a sermon and said that "Michael would chuck the dragon in the calaboose, and give him a bit of the rope's end, bless his eyes!"

We lay in this woful state for the greater part of a year, when, growing impatient, the crew deputed me to look up the captain. I looked up the mainmast: he was not there. In a remote cobwebby corner betweendecks I found him, with a book in his hand. On one side of him, with the cords newly cut, were three bales of Miss Braddon; on the other Mr. Edmund Yates was lying, confusedly and prodigiously. The captain had finished off Yates and was tackling Braddon. He was much changed.

"Captain Abersouth," said I, rising on tiptoe, so as to overlook the summit of Mons Yatü, "will you be good enough, sir, to tell me how long this thing is going on?"

"Can't say, I 'm sure," he replied, without pulling his eyes off the page: "they 'll probably make it up about the middle of the nex' volume. In the meantime old Pondronummus will foul his top-hamper and take out his papers for Looney Nairn, and young Silkmop will come in for a plum. Then if Susangelica don't slew round across his bows, after pizenin' that lubber Thundermuzzle, I don't know nothin' about the deep soundins o' the human heart, that 's all."

I could not take so hopeful a view of the situation, and went on deck, feeling very much disheartened. I had no sooner got my head out of the hatchway than I observed that we were moving along at a high rate of speed!

We had on board a bullock and a Dutchman. The former was chained by the neck to the foremast, the latter was allowed a good deal of liberty, being shut up only at night. There was bad blood between the two—a feud of long standing, having its origin in the Dutchman's love of milk and the bullock's sense of dignity. The particular and special cause of offence it would be tedious to narrate. Taking advantage of the animal's afternoon's *siesta*, the Dutchman had ventured to creep past his enemy, and had gone out on the bowsprit to fish. When the bullock waked, and saw the other creature on the bowsprit, it straddled its chain, levelled its horns, got its hind feet against something solid, and "pointed" dead for the Dutchman. The chain was strong, the mast held, and the ship, as Byron might have said, "walked the water like a thing of course." After that we kept the Dutchman right where he was, night and day, the old *Camel* making better time than she ever had done during the most determined gale. We still held due south: with a pilot at one end of the ship and a steersman at the other, we could not have got out of our course if we had tried.

We had now been nine months without meat. If we had had any bread or vegetables, we could have got on very well; but these had been exhausted two months before the meat was. We could not spare either the bullock or the Dutchman; the captain was a mere bag of bones. The fish would neither bite nor be bitten. Most of the ropes about the ship had already been used for maccaroni-soup; all the leather-work, including our boots and old Ben the bo'sen's, had been devoured in omelettes; with oakum and tar we had made tolerably good salad. After a brief tentative existence as tripe, the sails had succumbed to the gastric inevitable. The passengers had been eaten before we left port. But two courses remained between which to choose: we could eat ourselves or the captain's novels. Dreadful alternative; but a choice! Famine is relentless, but not mean. At the last one may die with his mouth full of meat if he will. But it is seldom that the starving are offered a shipload of the best authors, bound, and ready roasted by the cooks, who call themselves critics.

We ate that fiction. The works which the captain had thrown aside lasted six months. After they were gone—of course some had to be given to the bullock and the Dutchman—we stood by the captain, taking the books from his hands as he finished them. Sometimes, when we were apparently at our last gasp, he would skip a whole page of moralizing, or a bit of description; and always, as soon as he clearly foresaw the *dénoûment*—which he generally did at about the middle of the second volume — the work was handed over to us without a word of repining.

The effect of this diet was not unpleasant but peculiar. Physically, it sustained us; mentally, it exalted us; morally, it made us but a trifle worse than we were. We talked as no human beings ever talked before. Our wit was polished but without point. As in a stage broadsword combat, every cut has its parry, so in our conversation every remark suggested the reply, and this necessitated a certain rejoinder. The sequence once interrupted, the whole was bosh; when the thread was broken the beads were seen to be waxen and hollow. We made love to one another, and plotted darkly in the deepest obscurity of the hold. Each set of conspirators had its proper listener at the hatch. These, leaning too far over, would bump their heads together and fight. Occasionally there was confusion amongst them: two or more would assert a right to overhear the same plot. I remember at one time the cook, the carpenter, the second assistant-surgeon, and an able seaman contended with handspikes for the honour of betraying my confidence. Once there were three masked murderers of the second watch bending at the same instant over the sleeping form of a cabin-boy, who had been heard to mutter, a week previously, that he had "Gold! gold!" the accumulation of eighty—yes, eighty—years' piracy on the high seas, while sitting as M.P. for the borough of Zaccheus-cum-Down, and attending church regularly. I saw the captain of the foretop surrounded by suitors for his hand, while he was himself fingering the edge of a packing-case, and singing an amorous ditty to a lady-love shaving at a mirror. Our diction consisted, in about equal parts, of classical allusion, quotation from the stable, simper from the scullery, cant from the clubs, and the technical slang of heraldry. We boasted much of ancestry, and admired the whiteness of our hands whenever the skin was visible through a fault in the grease and tar. Next to love, the vegetable kingdom, murder, arson, adultery, and ritual, we talked most of art. The wooden figure-head of the *Camel*, representing a Guinea nigger detecting a bad smell, and the monochrome picture of two back-broken dolphins on the stern, acquired a new importance. The Dutchman had destroyed the nose of the one by kicking his toes against it, and the other was nearly obliterated by the slops of the cook; but each had its daily pilgrimage, and each constantly developed occult beauties of design and subtle excellencies of execution. On the whole we were greatly altered; and if the supply of contemporary fiction had been equal to the demand, the *Camel*, I fear, would not have been strong enough to contain the moral and æsthetic forces fired by the maceration of the brains of authors in the gastric juices of sailors.

Having now got the ship's literature off his mind into ours, the captain went on deck for the first time since leaving port. We were still steering the same course, and, taking his first observation of the sun, the captain discovered that we were in latitude 83° south. The heat was insufferable; the air was like the breath of a furnace within a furnace. The sea steamed like a boiling cauldron, and in the vapour our bodies were temptingly parboiled—our ultimate meal was preparing. Warped by the sun, the ship held both ends high out of the water; the deck of the forecastle was an inclined plane, on which the bullock laboured at a disadvantage; but the bowsprit was now vertical, and the Dutchman's tenure precarious. A thermometer hung against the mainmast, and we grouped ourselves about it as the captain went up to examine the register.

"One hundred and ninety degrees Fahrenheit!" he muttered in evident astonishment. "Impossible!" Turning sharply about, he ran his eye over us, and inquired in a peremptory tone, "Who 's been in command while I was runnin' my eye over that book?"

"Well, captain," I replied, as respectfully as I knew how, "the fourth day out I had the unhappiness to be drawn into a dispute about a game of cards with your first and second officers. In the absence of those excellent seamen, sir, I thought it my duty to assume control of the ship."

"Killed 'em, hey?"

"Sir, they committed suicide by questioning the fairness of my deal and the efficacy of four kings and an ace."

"Well, you lubber, what have you to say in defence of this extraordinary weather?"

"Sir, it is no fault of mine. We are far—very far, south, and it is now the middle of July. The weather is uncomfortable, I admit; but considering the latitude and season, it is not, I protest, unseasonable."

"Latitude and season!" he shrieked, livid with rage—"latitude and season! Why, you junk-rigged, flat-bottomed, meadow lugger, don't you know any better than that? Didn't yer little baby-brother ever tell ye that southern latitudes is colder than northern, and that July is the middle o' winter here? Go below, you son of a scullion, or I'll break your bones!"

"Oh! very well," I replied; "I'm not going to stay on deck and listen to such low language as that, I warn you. Have it your own way."

The words had no sooner left my lips, than a piercing cold wind caused me to cast my eye upon the thermometer. The mercury was descending rapidly; but in a moment the instrument was obscured by a blinding fall of snow. Towering icebergs rose from the water on every side, hanging their jagged masses hundreds of feet above the masthead, and shutting us completely in. The ship twisted and writhed; her decks bulged upward, and every timber groaned and cracked like the report of a pistol. The *Camel* was frozen fast. The jerk of her sudden stopping snapped the bullock's chain, and sent both that animal and the Dutchman over the bows, to accomplish their warfare either on the ice or below it—I cannot say which.

Elbowing my way forward to go below, as I had threatened, the crew tumbled to the deck on either hand like ten-pins. They were frozen stiff. Passing the captain, I asked him sneeringly how he liked the weather under the new *régime*. He replied with a vacant stare. The chill had penetrated to the brain, and the wind was wandering. He murmured:

"In this delightful spot, happy in the world's esteem, and surrounded by all that makes existence dear, they passed the remainder of their lives. The End."

His jaw dropped. The captain of the *Camel* was dead, unless I thaw him out some day for a new story. I have taken him out of worse places than that.

DOD GRILE.

* * *

THE CLASSICAL MUSICIANER.

THE music my sympathies warm to
Is foreign, and lofty, and classic;
And when I am asked to perform to
The folks, private concerts who swarm to,
It's like giving beer-drinkers Massic.[*]

They think I'm as mad as a hatter,
And just as I'm reaching the pith of it,
There's Brown, who is dying to chatter,
Recalls some irrevelant matter,
And *must* cross the room to tell Smith of it.

Most indistinct vocalization
Is heard 'mid a hush transcendantal—
But the thing to promote conversation,
In your hostess's keen estimation,
Is music that's just instrumental.

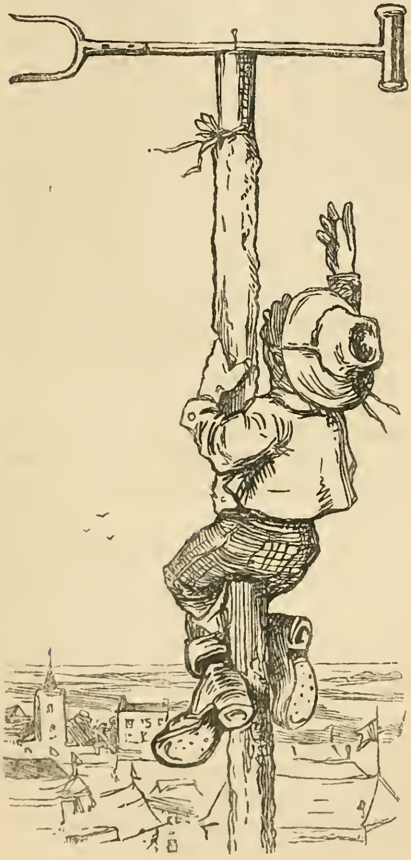
And, when gossip one's efforts is drowning,
One's fingers get feeble and faltery,
"With which moral"—to borrow a crowning
Effect from a poem of Browning—
I close my unrecognized psaltery.

G.

---

[*] *Vide* Horace, Carmina, lib. I. Od. I. line 19.

A CONTINUOUS STORY.



THE village of Mitran Eglise is one of those happy little villages, blest with an annual *fête* of its own, at which *Colin Maillard*, or Blindman's Buff, and a *Mât de Cocagne*, or greasy pole, are the chief dissipations, and waistcoats and cravats the great prizes. It was also blest with a good parish priest, whom to know was to love, and whom I never failed to visit when I was in the neighbourhood. It was a genuine treat to dine with him, to listen to his learned and pleasant talk, and partake of his excellent fare—for Flore *was* a cook, and the materials for the feast were home produce: a duck or fowl of his own fattening; a salad, from his own garden, and mixed as only he could do it; home-baked bread; and a dessert of pears and fruits, that acquired extra zest from his disquisitions on their peculiar flavours. You may be sure I was never within a reasonable distance without paying a visit to the good priest's house. One morning, as I was striding along the road to the village, I met a grey, grave old farmer, riding on his donkey and taking his milk to market at the nearest town. As I approached the beast stopped.

"*Pardon?*" said I, after a pause, putting the universal French interrogation, on the supposition that the farmer had pulled up to speak to me.

"Ah, monsieur!" said he, shaking his head sadly, "it's that confounded girl!"

I looked about, but could see no girl, so I repeated my question.

"That Maturine!" was the answer.

But still no girl was in view. So once more I put my interrogation.

"Yes, Maturine—and Alexandre Dumas!"

I thought, now, he must be a lunatic. "Is Monsieur Dumas in this neighbourhood?" I asked.

He replied that personally that illustrious writer was not there—but his books were. Then raising an appealing hand to heaven, he continued: "Ah, monsieur, what mischief these distinguished authors can do! She was an excellent servant until she met with Dumas!"

"Maturine?" said I.

"Yes," he replied, "excellent. For the first five years she was with me, there was not a better servant in the Department. She was up every morning between three and four, and well on her way to town with the milk by five. In an evil hour, monsieur, she was induced to purchase a number of Dumas' romances, which were being published in a cheap form. It was her ruin. She returned to the farm an hour later than usual that day. She had been devouring that book on the road. Everything consequently was an hour later—down to the time of her going to bed. Next day she rose an hour late, and of course was an hour late in starting with the milk, and an hour late in coming back. But picture to yourself, monsieur! Of course, day after day, what with that original failure of punctuality and an increasing appetite for Dumas' works, she got worse and worse. She started at ten o'clock instead of five; at midday instead of ten; until, believe me, monsieur, by the time she had got to the fifty-fourth book of 'Monte Christo,' she used to be starting with her milk-cans at seven o'clock at night, when every one else was returning home. That was the crown of it, monsieur! The donkey never went fast enough to overtake any one going to market, and if any one overtook it, the effect was if anything to quicken its pace. But now they *met* all the people of the village, and with every one that confounded woman would stop and converse. The donkey has never been the same beast since. As monsieur saw, he halts the moment he meets any one, and nothing can persuade him to stir."

"Then you have to take the milk yourself now," said I. "What has become of Maturine?"

"Ah! I was obliged to send her away, monsieur. I bore with her for seventeen years, but there are limits to the patience of every man. Mine gave out at last!"

I looked at him with admiration. He was absolutely excusing himself for not bearing longer with such an infliction as this woman;—after enduring her vagaries so gently all that time!

"Ah!" he continued, "it was sad. Holy Mother! she got at last to come home close upon midnight, and then nothing would content her but a supper of fried fish; and after all, you understand, monsieur, the smell of frying fish is not agreeable to be waked up by at night when one has been in bed three or four hours. Then I found there was a light burning in her room, and I feared it was a fire. Oh, monsieur, the extravagance! She had a lighted candle, and was reading the seventy-sixth book of 'Monte Christo.' I spoke to her strongly, and extinguished the candle; but when I was about to rise at half-past three—oh, Heaven!—there was the light still, and she was sitting up in bed devouring the eighty-first book. It was terrible, monsieur! it was ignoble! I was constantly obliged to break my rest in order to see that that miserable woman was not burning candles and reading 'Monte Christo'!"

"But she must have got through 'Monte Christo in time," said I.

"I dare say she may some of these days, but she was only at the hundred and fiftieth book when I was obliged to part with her. But there are other works of Dumas published, monsieur, and, if they are all the same length, I don't know what is to become of that unhappy woman! When the Day of Judgment arrives"—here he crossed himself devoutly—"she will still be sitting by the fire frying fish, with the seven thousand and ninety-second volume of 'Monte Christo' on her lap, and a candle burning to waste on the table at her elbow!"

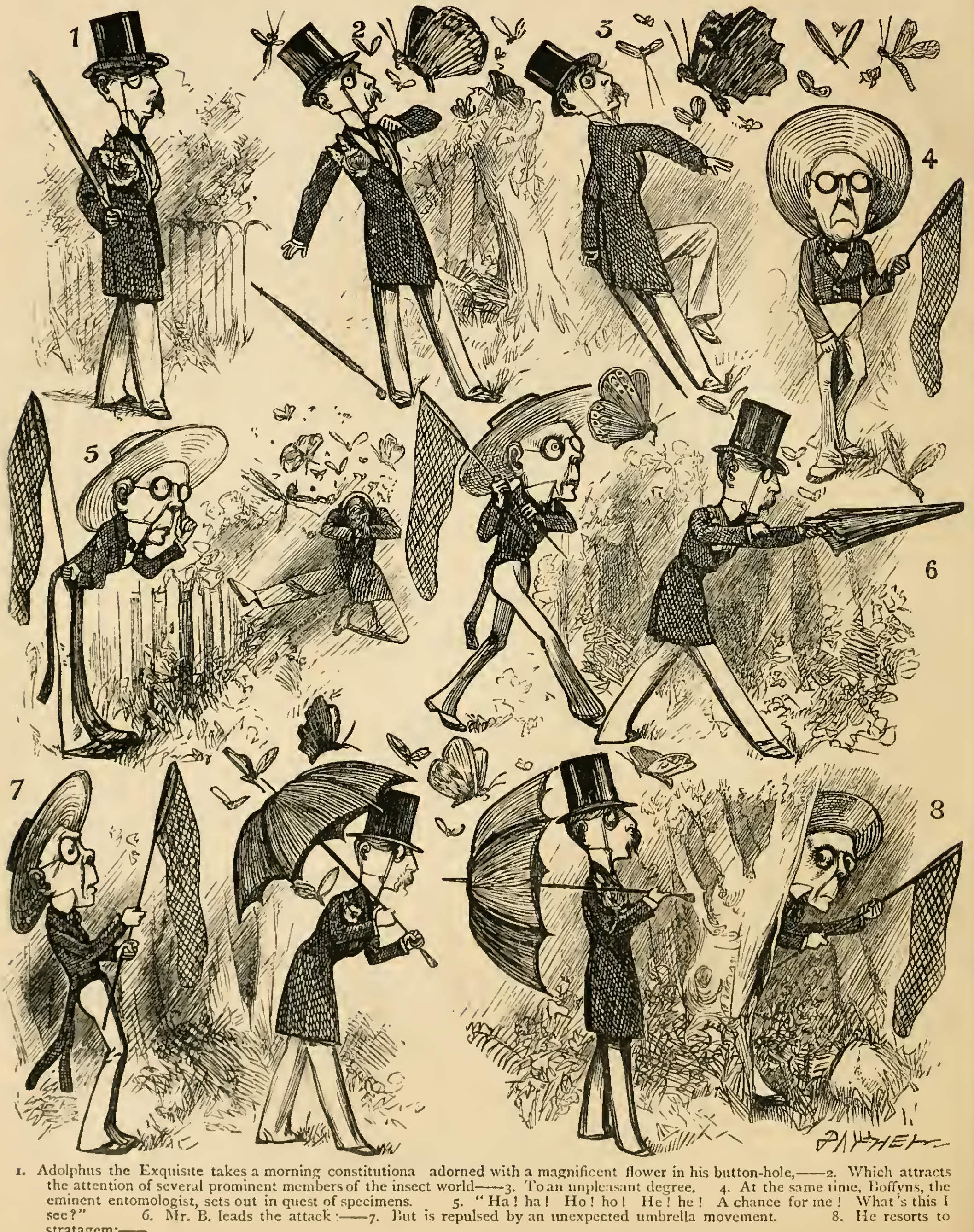
I suppose the old man was no scholar, and took every *sou* part of Dumas' story for a "book," and as, including illustrations, the parts would be pretty numerous, it was not unreasonable that he should look upon the decidedly voluminous romance as practically interminable, and likely to supply Maturine with ample reading till the crack of doom.

The picture was too much for him! He made a violent effort, and got the donkey to move, chiefly, I think, because it had tired of standing still, and not at all out of deference to his wishes.

When I looked round, he was still jogging along quietly, shaking his head mournfully, and, I doubt not, saying to himself "she *must* be at the hundredth book by this time!"

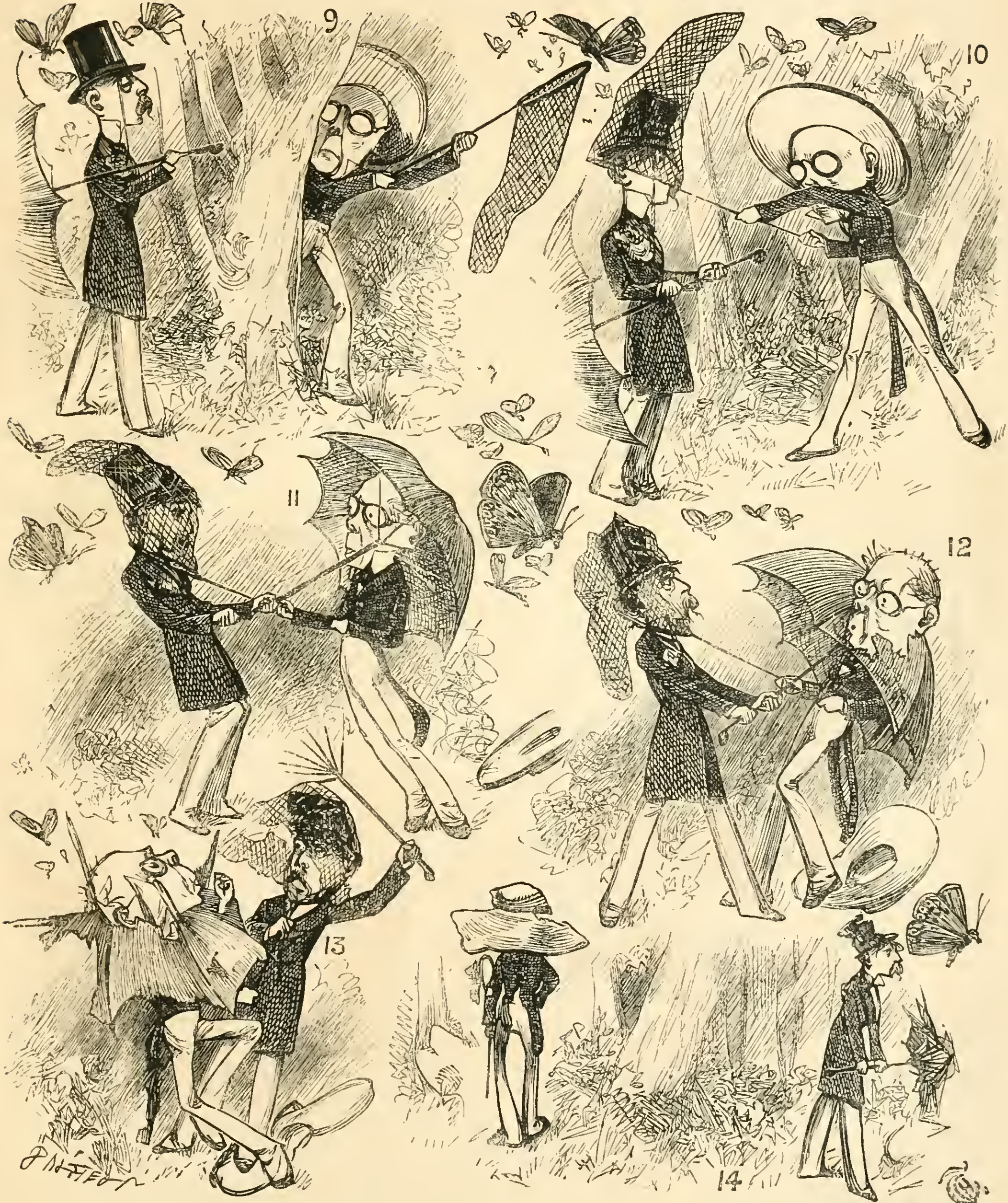
M. Labais.

THE EXQUISITE AND THE ENTOMOLOGIST.



1. Adolphus the Exquisite takes a morning constitutional adorned with a magnificent flower in his button-hole,——2. Which attracts the attention of several prominent members of the insect world——3. To an unpleasant degree. 4. At the same time, Boffyns, the eminent entomologist, sets out in quest of specimens. 5. "Ha! ha! Ho! ho! He! he! A chance for me! What's this I see?" 6. Mr. B. leads the attack:——7. But is repulsed by an unexpected umbrella movement. 8. He resorts to stratagem:——

THE EXQUISITE AND THE ENTOMOLOGIST.



9. And, by a left flank manœuvre, is successful in netting——10. Adolphus !——11. Who returns the compliment——12. With the utmost promptitude. 13. Terrific struggle takes place !——14. From which they emerge wiser and very much sadder atoms of humanity.

A LIFE'S HATRED.

WHEN this confession first sees the light of day I shall be no more. I write it calmly and fearlessly, for suspicion has long since passed me by: indeed, the murder of which I am guilty seems to have been quite forgotten by all but myself and the widow of my victim, and even she doesn't know that it was a murder. I often see her now, and as she thanks me for the endeavours I made to discover the body, my blood grows cold, and again I feel my hands twining in my victim's throat, again I see his face turn black, again hear the gurgling sounds of suffocation. But he is dead, and I, for the first time, begin to realize that I must die too. Better, perhaps, the speedy hand of the hangman, than this lingering life of remorse; for, though I hated my rival with an intensity unknown by those who only kill for pelf, and would kill him again a dozen times if I had but the chance, he is dead, and remorse is bound to follow, unless I and every other writer have been wrong in the whole course of education, and education is wrong as well.

* * * * *

Ben Thompson and I were boys at school together. He was a bigger boy than I, and a more powerful. Also he had more money, and a greater power of sarcasm—at least, all the other boys said he had; but then they would have said anything for a consideration. He was rich and powerful; I was poor and friendless, and like the poor and friendless always do, I went to the wall. Looking back now through the dim vista of years, I fancy that a great deal of Ben's popularity was caused by his father keeping a pastry-cook's shop. I know that if I could have brought each morning such a handkerchief full of "stale," and distributed it around, I should have been as popular as Ben was; but it was not to be. I had nothing to give, still I felt, as I often have since, that if I had I would have kept it to myself. Neither Ben nor the boys liked me, and after I told the master about the pastry, and said it was my private impression that his father didn't know he brought it, no more was ever handed round to me. How mean and paltry! And though his father did call next day and say that the stale and broken tarts were sent with his full permission, I don't believe it to this day. Once before I had hinted to our beloved preceptor that I couldn't understand where Thompson got all his money from, and an inquiry had been set on foot, resulting, I am bound to admit, in the honourable acquittal of the *suspect;* and for this endeavour to have everything right and correct among my schoolmates I was, though I could never tell why, called a sneak, a blab, and a tell-tit. But then I had no pastry with which to bribe my companions; no money with which to treat them to ginger beer and saveloys, or else, when Thompson punched my head and pulled my ears for "trying to get him in a row," all the other boys wouldn't have shown unequivocal delight. Oh, how I did hate Thompson! Oh, how I hated everybody! And in the silence of my chamber that night, amid the snoring of my brothers, and with the dim light of the gas-lamp opposite apparently sanctifying the oath, I swore that some day I would be bitterly avenged. And then I ate the two best tarts I had cribbed out of Thompson's satchel, as it hung next my bag behind the door.

Time wore on, and neither my opponent nor myself showed any signs of reconciliation. I always considered it my bounden duty to call the attention of the master to any deed which I considered evil of Thompson's. Also, whenever I could get anything out of the pastry-bag unobserved, I regarded it as my property by right, as it enabled me to declare more conscientiously when the feed was going on that I wouldn't have had any if I had been asked. One day, just as I was helping myself to one of the best pieces, when, as I thought, all the boys were out in the play-ground, Thompson returned suddenly. He didn't speak out like a man, and so I thought he didn't see what I was about, and therefore, instead of putting the tarts back or secreting them, I boldly, and with conscious innocence, carried them in my pocket. The result was that, just before lunch-time, I was suddenly taken before the master and searched. In vain I pleaded that I had bought and paid for the articles discovered on me; the authorities, in a mean and partisan-like spirit, refused to listen, and I was once again in a miserable plight through the instrumentality of Thompson. I was taken up and done for severely, and I have always looked back upon that castigation as an instance of the unfairness of scholastic punishment as usually administered. How did they know I took the tarts? I feel very strongly on this point, for I am sure that I was a victim to the popularity of Thompson. Suppose I had brought a charge of stealing tarts against him, and the tarts were found in his desk, would he have been punished?

I can speak feelingly on this point also, for a day or two afterwards I was reading how detectives find things out; and so, guided by what I read, I took two sponge-cakes from my enemy's bag, being sure this time that no one was looking, and with much self-sacrifice, instead of eating them myself, placed them in his desk. When the school was all assembled, I suddenly missed my cakes, and going to the chief master's desk, made my loss known. Being asked if I suspected anybody, I said, "Yes; Thompson," and requested that he might be searched. The master said he didn't believe that Thompson would steal cakes, as he could always get more than he wanted for himself, and was constantly giving them away. But I insisted, and the cakes were found in his desk. Then mark the result. Instead of being taken at once and publicly horsed, as I was, Thompson was asked if he could explain the matter. Of course he said the cakes were his own, and every one believed him—every one but myself, of course; and when he proceeded to show where they were broken off from two others left in his bag, I was convicted of a gross attempt to destroy a boy's character, as well as of many other minor offences, and was summarily expelled the school. I was not even allowed to say anything in my own defence; and what was still more annoying, the master said that if it had not been for the sake of exposing his school, he would have expelled me long ago. Who can wonder, then, that I had a desperate and fast-growing hatred of Mr. Thompson, and of all the paltry ways he had taken to secure popularity at my expense?

The reception I met with at home did not tend to cheer my spirits. My mother said I was a disgrace to the family, and sobbed aloud. When my father came home, he didn't say a word—he was not an emotional man,—but he took me upstairs, and with a stout leather strap, kept for emergencies, he—as he himself described the operation—"gave me toko."

Toko (I speak from experience) must be received to be properly understood and appreciated.

Either the world is very small, or fate must have intended Thompson and me to be mixed up together through life; but, however it was, before many years had passed over our heads we were both clerks in the same office. He being much the elder, and, as he thought, much the cleverer, was my superior, and the manner in which he took advantage of his position renewed and strengthened our old animosity. He commenced by patronizing me, and saying he was quite ready to forget what had happened at school if I was, as if ever I could forget the misery he had brought on me; and, though I shook his extended hand just for form's sake, I made up my mind to serve him out as soon as ever the opportunity arrived. His father had by this time given up the pastrycook's shop, and gone into business as a wine and spirit merchant, so Thompson was now always treating the fellows in the office to glasses of port and sherry, just as in school-days he used to treat the boys to pastry. I always studiously refused to take any, because, as I told all the other clerks, I didn't believe he came honestly by the bottles; but when I got a chance unobserved, I used to take a rare good swig, and fill up with water, soapy for choice; and by this means served a double purpose: I got my wine without being in any way beholden to Thompson, and I at the same time ruined the reputation of old Thompson as a wine-seller. At last the men were quite shy about the drink, and used to say that they wondered how any one could deal with such a vile old adulterator. And so Mr. Thompson didn't for a long time gain much by his mock generosity.

But, somehow or the other, luck was always on his side, and my plans were disconcerted at last. One day, when there was nobody in the room or about, I took out my duplicate key, and went to Thompson's drawer as usual, just to see what he had got there. He had evidently become tired of bringing wine, for there was a bottle of stuff in the desk I couldn't for a long time make out. It was decidedly a cordial water or liqueur, but it wasn't peppermint or shrub, and yet the smell, which was very strong, seemed familiar to me. At last I hit upon it: it was aniseed of a strong kind. And now, thought I, he fancies this can't be altered like the wine. I may as well say there was little doubt in my mind that Thompson, in his mean way, had begun to suspect me again, and I fancied he had brought this fresh drink thinking I should be afraid to meddle with it; but he little knew the stuff of which I was composed. I took a little drop, and liked it so well that I poured out nearly a whole tumblerful, and, filling up the bottle with water, I gulped the aniseed down, locked the drawer, and rinsed out the glass.

I can't exactly say what happened afterwards: everything was dazed to me for three or four days; but it seems I was the victim of as cruel a conspiracy as ever was planned. The stuff I drank was not aniseed at all, but absinthe—a vile compound I never see now without shuddering and thinking of Thompson's perfidy. The beast! I must in my guilelessness have drunk enough to poison half a dozen people; and it seems that I raved like a maniac, told how I had tricked that fellow Thompson, and stated publicly the contempt I had always felt for our employer. I have discovered since that, even if I had not mentioned it, this infernal stuff would have told the tale, for when mixed with water it changes colour, and is a regular Judas of treachery, as well as a demon of mischief.

Of course, as you may pretty well guess, Thompson triumphed once more, and I had to seek another situation. I was too big for my father to thrash then, but he told me if I didn't soon get work I might stay away from his house altogether; and, as I knew he was not over-fond of me, I had to rough it a bit, and get the best employment that offered to a young man whose last employer had refused to give him a character, and had said that his refusal was really a kindness. This, of course, I traced to Mr. Thompson's influence, and blessed him for it accordingly.

Well, in course of time matters righted themselves somewhat, and I got a very comfortable engagement. If I had known before I took it that Thompson had exerted himself for me, I would have refused the situation; but as I was very cozy by the time I discovered his instrumentality, I wasn't going to be fool enough to turn out: would you? But now comes the cruellest part of T.'s conduct towards me. I happened to meet a young lady out one evening at a friend's, and felt that I was a stricken man. I never knew what love was before, and never shall again. For weeks and months I used to take every opportunity of being near my charmer, and though it went rather against me, I made her up a parcel of nice little presents. It was the first—and last—time I ever gave anything away, and the feeling was quite curious. At first I hoped she wouldn't take them, and then when I felt that her refusal would be a sign of dislike, or certainly of want of affection, I was afraid she wouldn't. She took them, sure enough, and seemed quite unconcerned, never thinking that since they had been in my possession I had got quite fond of them. Besides, they must have cost me three and sixpence altogether!

I was a long while mustering up courage, but at last I proposed to her in due form; and—well, what do you think? In the coolest manner possible, with her face belying her words, she told me she was very sorry, but that she was already engaged. Heaven and earth! already engaged! To whom? And then came the crusher: of all the people in the world, to Mr. Thompson. I think I rather alarmed her; and though I was afterwards told that she said the manner in which I asked for my presents back was as rough as it was mean, I am not a bit ashamed of what I said or did. It was not at all likely I was going to let her keep the things I had paid for when she was going to be married to another, especially when that other was mine enemy, Thompson.

Well, in due course of time they were married, and they even had the cheek to send me both cards and cake. I wasn't going to waste the cake, so I ate that; but I burnt the cards, just as I would have burnt those they represented if I could. But by this time I had quite made up my mind that T. and I could not live in the same world together, and I determined to get rid of him at the first possible opportunity. It was a hard matter to discover the best way to do it, but at last I hit upon an expedient. I knew that Thompson always went to Margate, Ramsgate, or some other place, during the summer, and that he was very fond of bathing. So I at once commenced to take lessons in swimming under water. It took some years to make me perfect, but by the end of last spring I had succeeded in being able to stay under water for an indefinite period—say three or four hours,—and during that period I could travel an indefinite distance—say from London to Gravesend. So, all being perfectly ready, I waited my opportunity.

Very soon the Thompsons took their annual trip to the sea-side. Just as if to oblige me, they went earlier than usual. The place was Broadstairs, and before they had been there a week, I obtained leave and went down too. I carefully noted what time T. went into the water, and the second morning, opportunity serving, I did the deed I had been so long meditating. I had purposely selected a machine which was a long way from his, and was rejoiced to see that he was in the habit of swimming out for some distance. When he had got quite away from a knot of bathers, I silently went after him; and just as he was enjoying his life to the fullest extent, I, by depriving him of it, paid all the debts I owed him in one fell blow. Down, down, derry derry down, I dragged him, with my hands squeezed tightly round his throat—not that there was much necessity for that—and as the green water bubbled and played around us, I laughed in his face, to note the swollen look which suffocation and surprise were fast putting on it. I really do think he died as much of surprise that I should be able to keep under water without drowning, as of anything else; but, anyhow, he died, and I swam back to my bathing-machine, a murderer!

We had in the course of the struggle gone a good way out to sea, and I was in no way astonished that the body was not discovered. I made myself very conspicuous in searching for it, and received both thanks and admiration, my diving powers being the theme of universal praise, though I didn't let people see how much I could do, for fear of arousing suspicion. But he was never found. From Mrs. T. I received so much gratitude, that the remorse which is bound to follow upon murder set in earlier than usual—set in, somewhat strangely, before discovery of the murder—and as since Thompson's death I have had nothing to live for, especially as his widow has declined to marry again—declined, at all events, to marry me—I have written this confession, and am going to post it to the nearest police-station, and then set fire to the house and cremate what will not drown.

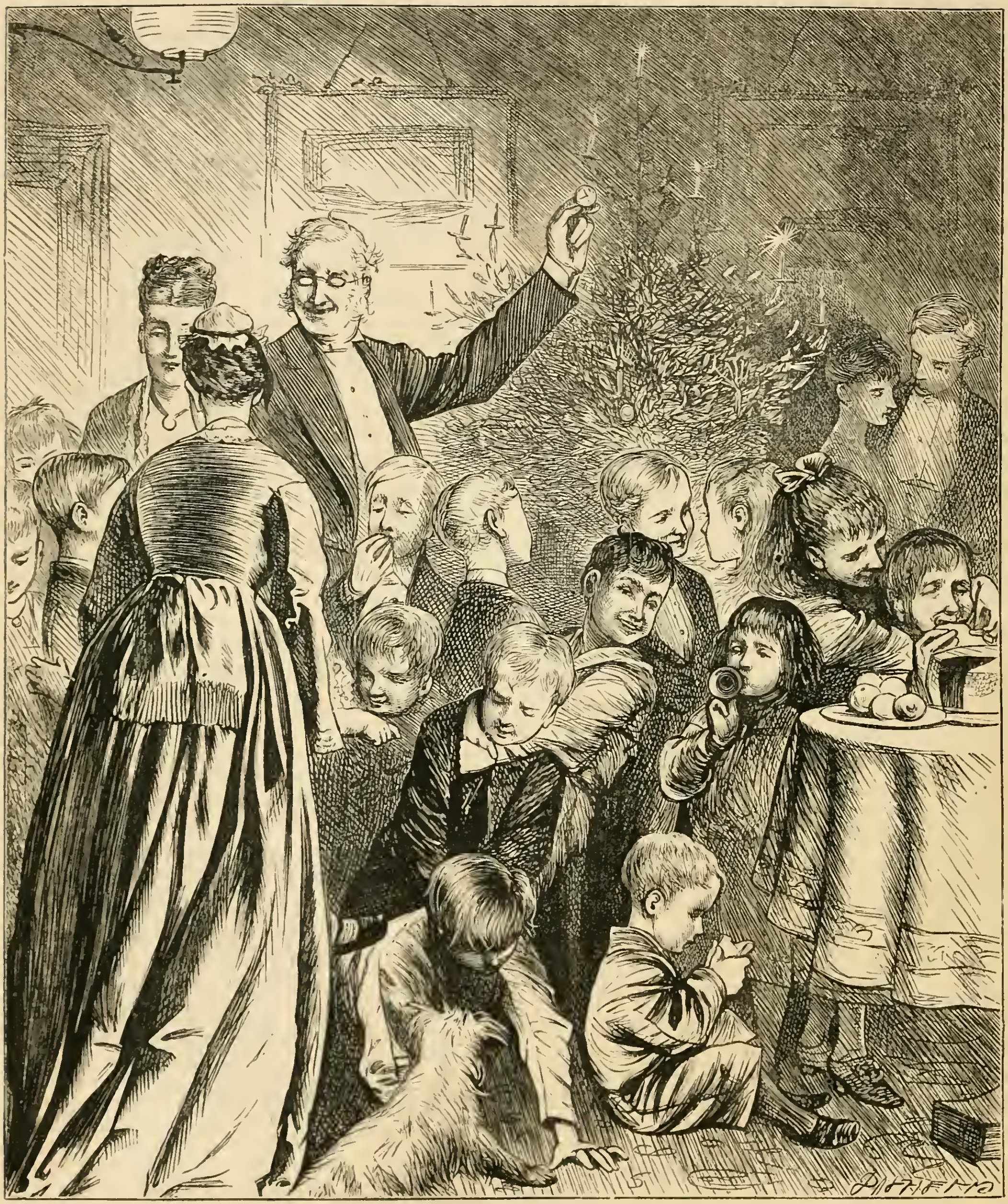
Where are those lucifers?

* * * * *

I reopen this to say that Thompson wasn't drowned at all. It happened that an East Indiaman, bound for Australia, was passing Broadstairs just at the time he rose to the surface, hooked him up, and restored his suspended animation. As East Indiamen, when on their way to Australia by way of Broadstairs, never stop anywhere; and as, even if they did, T. was not in a fit plight to be put ashore, he had to go all the way to the antipodes, where they gave him some clothes and something to eat, and sent him back again. He has just called in to say that he looks on the whole matter as a practical joke, and that as he isn't dead he won't give me in charge for murder. And so I shan't set fire to the place, but shall live, if only for the purpose of hating Thompson worse than ever, and of trying some new plan of being even with him yet.

How I do hate that man, to be sure!

HENRY SAMPSON.



SONGS OF TREES.

SONGS OF TREES.

January— AMID the boughs, in sheltered copse,
The chaffinch twitters as he hops.

February— Where apple-blossoms shelter seek,
The titmouse gives his shrilly creak.

March— Where the larch-tassel early blushes,
The sad song of the greenfinch gushes.

April— High in the elm, by moonlight pale,
Complains the mournful nightingale.

May— Where hornbeam catkins softly wave,
The blackcap chants his mellow stave.

June— In cherry-trees whose fruit is ripe,
The blackbirds, well contented, pipe.

July— Upon the lime, in morning's hushes,
You hear the fluting of the thrushes.

August— The cuckoos, in the ashes high,
Shout out a last farewell, and fly.

September—The whitethroat echo now invokes,
To say "good bye" among the oaks.

October— The swallows shriek a last "twit-twit,"
Above the poplars, ere they flit.

November—'Mid hollies, clad in snow-down coat,
The robin swells his ruddy throat.

December— But give to me the Christmas tree
Before all other ones that be.
To that belong
The laugh and song
Of children that around it throng!

T. H

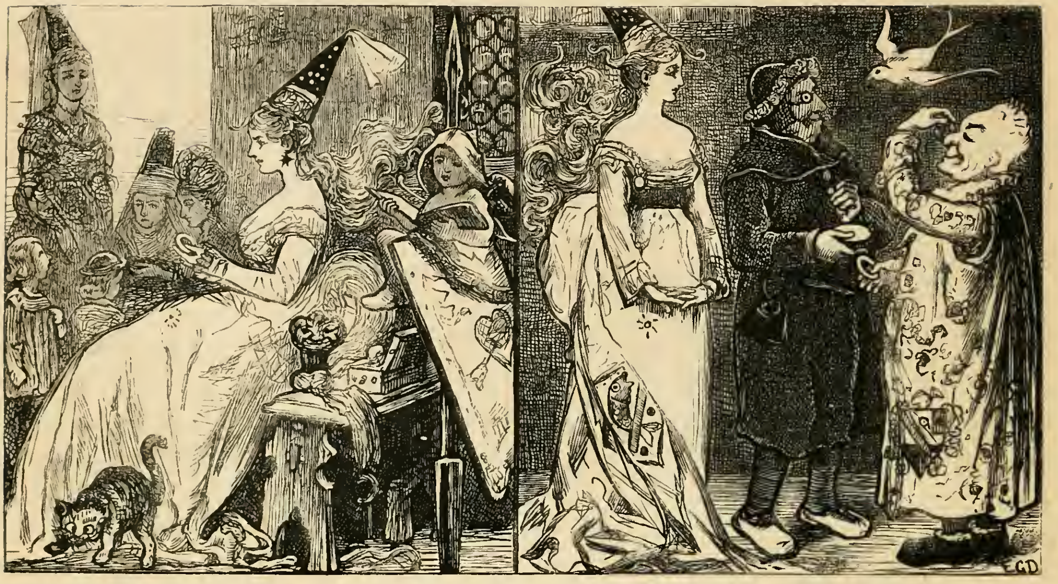
QUEEN SIGRID THE HAUGHTY.

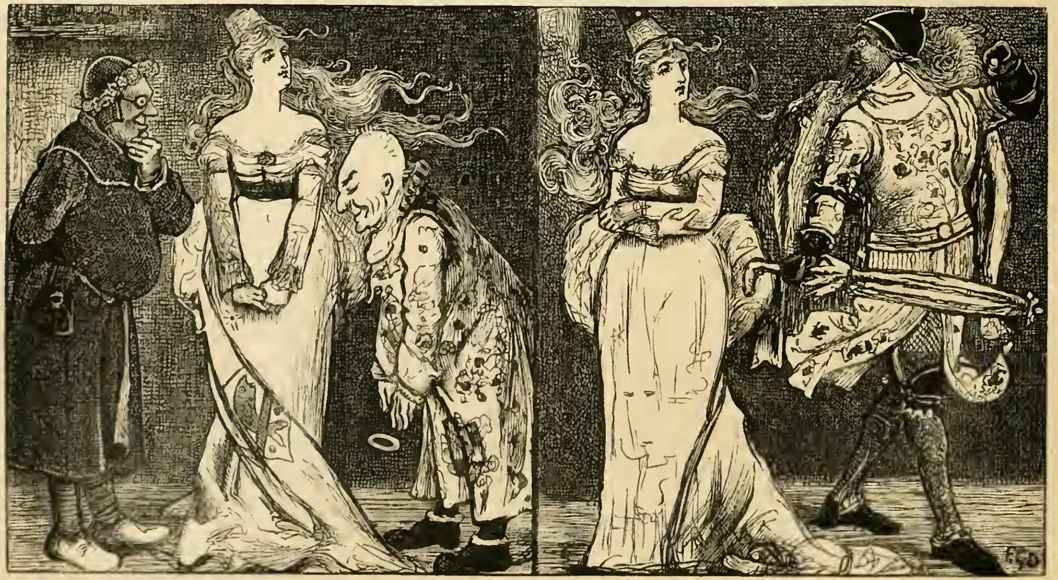
(A LONGFELLOW CUT SHORT.)

QUEEN SIGRID the Haughty sat proud and aloft,
In her chamber that looked over meadow and croft;
She held in her hand a ring of gold
That was brought to her by a henchman old.
King Olaf had sent her that wedding gift;
But knowing King Olaf was prone to thrift,
She gave the ring to her goldsmiths twain,
Who smiled as they handed it back again.
Then Sigrid the Queen, in her haughty way,
Asked, "Why do you smile, my goldsmiths, pray?"
They answered, "Queen, if the truth be told,
The ring is Brummagem—'t isn't gold!"
The colour flushed over forehead and cheek,
She simply stamped—but she did not speak.
A footstep rang on the outer stair,
And in strode Olaf with royal air.
He kissed her hand, and he whispered love,
And (just for the rhyme) he murmured "Dove!"
She smiled with contempt as she said "Oh, King!
Step it—and get five bob on that ring!"
The face of King Olaf was dark with gloom,
He swore as he strode about the room.
She raised her brows and looked at the King—
"To swear before ladies is not the thing!"
"Why should I wed thee," he cried, "old maid?
A faded beauty, a heathen jade!"
He swore a swear, and he stamped a stamp,
And he fetched her a whack with his gingham Gamp.
They placed the King in a dungeon vault,
Because he was guilty of an assault,
With Tupper for supper, and hot cross buns
They slowly starved him, those savage ones,
And his only drink was petrole*um*—
And he'd been accustomed to Red Heart Rum!

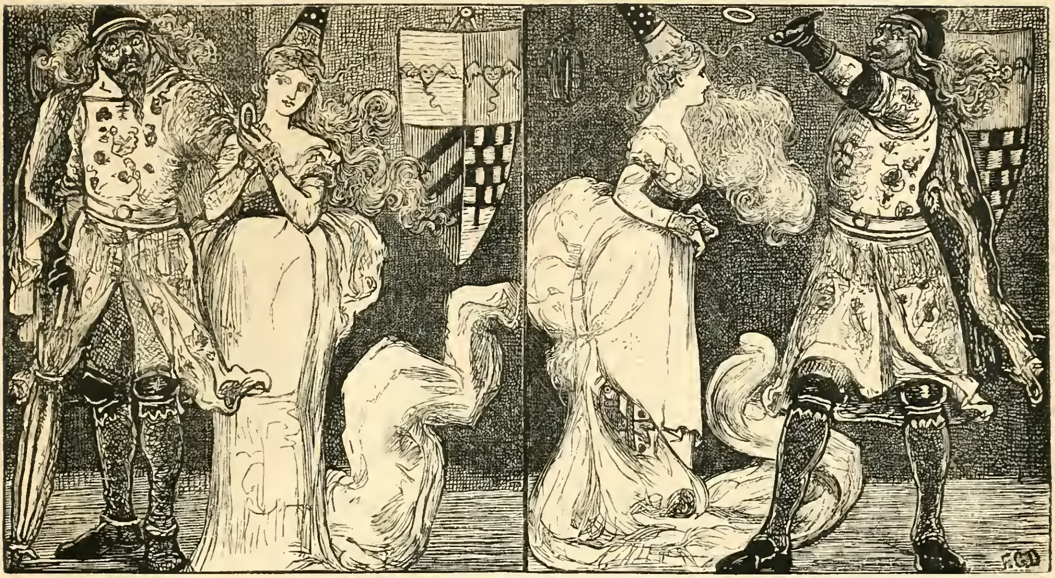
A. SHORTFELLOW.

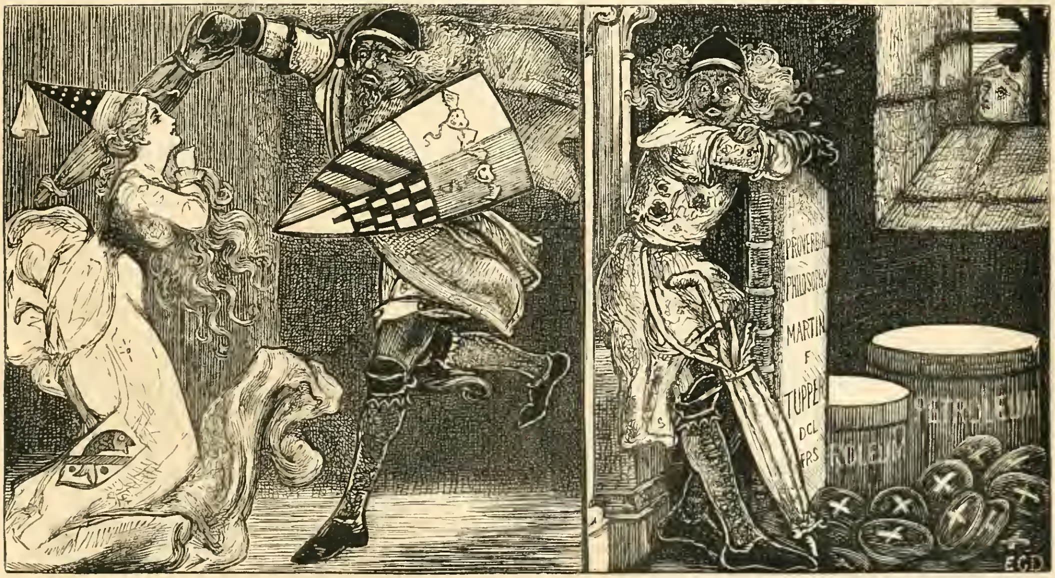
QUEEN SIGRID THE HAUGHTY.





A LONGFELLOW CUT SHORT.




PROVERBIAL
PHILOSOPHY
MARTIN
F
TUPPER
DCL
FRS
E.G.D.

TWO PICTURES FROM MY GALLERY OF GIRLS.

I.

DRAWN BY LEECH.

DOWN on the sands there strolls a merry maid,
Aglow with ruddy health and gladsome glee;
She breasts the breezes of the summer sea,
And lets each zephyr trifle with each braid;

Laughs gaily as her petticoats evade
Her girlish grasp and wildly flutter free,
As, bending to rude Boreas' decree,
The neatest foot and ankle are displayed;

Displayed the rounded figure full of grace—
Half pouting thro' diaphanous disguise—
Displayed the snowy frillery and lace,
And dainty *bottines* none dare criticise.
See, blushing thro' the torrent of her curls,
The bonniest of England's bonny girls!

II.

PAINTED BY LESLIE.

OH, who can paint the picture of my pet?—
As 'mid the grey-green hay she childlike kneels,
Who shows a dainty slipper, then conceals,
'Neath tangled grass, its Celadon rosette.

A soft white robe, a broidered chemisette
Scarce veils her rounded bosom, as it steals
A subtle charm from that it half reveals—
As sweet and modest as the violet!

A gipsy hat casts shadows of pearl-grey
Across the petal pinkness of her cheek;
And sun and shadow alternate, and play,
With smiles and sorrow, fitful hide-and-seek.
Oh, who can paint the picture of my pet?—
My dainty, dimpled, loveable coquette!

J. ASHBY-STERRY.

CONCERNING PIGS.

I HAVE always been under the impression that the deference to which he is entitled, is withheld from that useful and beautiful animal, the pig. He is cheated out of his proper position in the social scale. He is treated unjustly, alike by men of letters—that is, such as contribute to this Annual, and by men of capital—that is, other people. Burns wrote lines to a butterfly on a lady's bonnet in church ('t wasn't a butterfly, but no matter: this is intended for family reading); Gray achieved a dirge on a favourite cat drowned in a tub of gold fishes; and Coleridge soared "to elegize an ass;" but who has ever made a hero of a pig? Nobody that I have ever heard of. Even Virgil does not spare him a hexameter in his third "Georgic." The pig is accounted unclean because of mental obliquity of prejudice; but by whom? By the people who know no better, who have never read Charles Lamb, who are insensible to the charms of roast porker's head, boiled cheek, fricasseed ears, appetizing harslets floating in port-wine sauce, the delicious round of brawn, or that most tempting of tid-bits, the oleaginous string of black-puddings. The pig is not squeamish in his tastes, I allow; he will eat almost anything, but so will other members of the animal creation. At Portumna they usually drown a policeman every two months for the benefit of the Lough Derg eels; yet I have observed that eminent naturalist, Mr. Henry Lee, mute with admiration over a newly-caught specimen of the *anguilla constabularis*. Ducks are not fastidious. I have seen a duck make an alderman's feast off the offal rejected by my favourite; and yet the duck is not accounted unclean, and my dear old friend, Hans Christian Andersen, has devoted a charming storiette to the adventures of an ugly duckling. But who has made a hero of an ugly pigling? Nobody that I have ever heard of. There are legends, but legends without a spark of the true legendary fire, the genial hearth-glow, concerning pigs; but these mostly relate to pigs in an insane state of mind, or tend to place the pig before us in an incongruous character.

The pig, as I have said, is a useful and beautiful animal. The infant pig is useful as an article of diet—to take him in his lowest aspect; and beautiful in his lively eyes, his delicate pink skin, and his frolic playfulness, as he frisks round his mother's hind legs, restive as kitten or lambkin. The aged pig is useful and beautiful — useful as an article of diet — to take him in his lowest aspect again; and beautiful in his curvilinearity, for is not the curve the line of beauty? And when the pig falls before the sacrificial knife, is not his hide useful to Melton Mowbray? and does not his clean white carcase, suspended in front of the butcher's stall, bring water to the palate of the human *porcus, Epicuri de grege?* Ah! that is exactly what I find fault with. Why should such an epithet be used? What pig ever over-ate himself on acorns? What pig ever waxed apoplectic if let run wild and nibble turnip-tops at will? It is only the pig in the artificial state, when "cabin'd, cribbed, and confined"—pampered on greaves and stuffed with linseed cake — that forgets himself, gobbles, and grunts, and snores, as if his sole object in life were to out-rival Daniel Lambert or become President of the American Clam-Bake Society. As if there were not worthier ambitions! As if the stories of pigs that could pick the ace of hearts from a pack of cards; that could point to the love-sick lassie in a company; or that careered triumphantly before crowds, whisking their greased tails in the very noses of their pursuers, were miserable fables! But these swinish *gourmands* have one excuse — they have been corrupted by evil communication with man.

I do not mean to affirm that all pigs are naturally gentle and self-denying. Some are born with vices. On the 4th of June, 1094, a pig was hanged on a gibbet, near Laon, for devouring the child of a cowherd. But, then, consider the number of cowherds who have regaled on rashers of bacon in their time. Again, on the 10th of January, 1457, a sow and her six sucklings were indicted for homicide on the person of one Jéhan Lenfant, of Savigny, when the former was found guilty without extenuating circumcumstances, which showed the *animus* of the jury, and sentenced to be hanged by the hind legs from the branch of a tree. The youngsters were let off, there being no positive proof connecting them with the crime, though there was strong circumstantial evidence, their chaps being sprinkled with a froth of warm gore. But these were exceptional pigs, and we are no more warranted in condemning the porcine race as murderers because of these isolated occurrences than we should be in denouncing English working men as brutal because some of them remonstrate with their wives, when their dinner is not to their liking, with the heels of their clogs. Your ordinary pig of the middle ranks is amiable, an indefatigable hunter after food when he is hungry, and a passionate lover of the *dolce far niente* when he has satisfied his appetite. You may see him after a meal, basking by the sunny side of a wall, the world forgetting, by the world forgot—a picture of philosophic contentment. All he asks is to be let alone, but man will not grant him that negative favour. Mischievous little boys take a pleasure in poking him in the ribs; malicious cabbies are in ecstacies when they can crack their whip-lash round his tender ears; "active and intelligent" police officers (they are all active and intelligent, are they not?) arrest him on the Queen's highway and put him in the pound; his owner even cruelly slits his nostrils and inserts a ring in them. Really, when one comes to think of it, this is no trifling matter: the pig is most barbarously treated, and the attention of the Royal Humane Society should be drawn to the subject.

It is hard to conceive that this ill-used being is the piggie we affect such hypocritical fondness for in our nursery rhymes when we gently finger babies' toes and sing:

"This little pig went to market;
This little pig stopped at home;
This little pig got bread and butter;
And this little pig got none!
This little pig cried, 'Week! week!
I 'll wait till my mammy comes home!'"

The pig is sagacious, or no truffles would garnish our dinner-tables. More than that, I maintain that the pig is endowed with exquisite sensibility; and I will relate a story in proof, which came to my knowledge in Paris. I am careless whether the story is credited or not by the mob: some folk are as sceptical as the Tichborne twelve, and will not believe in the sea-serpent, or the enormous gooseberry that grows every autumn; but the story is true, nevertheless.

Well, this pig of which I write was an inhabitant of the Quartier Latin—that mirthful, happy rendezvous of wild, buoyant, improvident studentship, affuent in spirits, but limp of purse.

In one of the narrowest, crookedest, darkest lanes of the network of streets at the back of what is now the Boulevard St. Michel, as one crossed diagonally from the Sorbonne to the Pantheon, stood a small tavern which will be known by men of the present generation as *Le Cochon Fidèle*, "The Faithful Pig." Here flocked the Bohemians who lived by the code of honour and the Morgue, and coloured pen-and-ink photographs of duels and suicides with equal glee; the *rapin*, tall-hatted, long-haired, and cunning in pipes, who paid his shot by scratching caricatures; the medical student of fifteen years' standing, whose only books were woman's looks; his listless brother of the law, who had pawned his "Code Napoléon" long since, and had his hair cut *à la Robespierre* on tick; dreamy ideologists, skilled billiard-players; and here, her last asylum, had come the ultimate specimen of that extinct race, the Lisette of Béranger.

At the *Cochon Fidèle* the gayest parties for canoeing at Asnières and picnicking at Robinson's Oak were made up, and from its portals twice a week a merry band sallied arm-in-arm to enjoy a saucy revel in the *salons* of Père Bullier. It was a sporting place when I knew it; there was no dulness there, no respectability. We cracked jokes always; sometimes cracked bottles — when we had the money; seldom cracked heads, for we were all firm friends, a joyous sodality. The ceiling and walls of the diminutive tavern were eloquent with grotesque sketches in charcoal, distemper, and oil; the portraits of the principal clients of the house were there in side-splitting distortion, but still recognizable; over an inner door was the most *bizarre* of representations of a *levée* of pig-headed courtiers; a panel opposite glowed with lifelike portraits, in an oval cluster, of literary worthies worshipped by Young France—Dumas, de Musset, Murger, Georges Sand, Gautier, Janin, Gerard de Nerval, Béranger, and Hugo, of course, for *Le Cochon Fidèle* was nothing if not realistic.

Portly Courbet, with his pleasant face, ruddy as Burgundian wine, came sometimes to smoke an ancient cutty, and Cham and Gill, and others who have since won renown; and some of the wild daubs around that mocked us were their handiwork. The laugh of Henri Monnier was familiar with the echoes of the stained rooftree, and Charles Baudelaire had often strolled into the *Le Cochon Fidèle* to borrow a ream of foolscap from a more fortunate brother. Even some of the *dii majores* enthroned in the oval cluster had haunted the tavern in these days. At yonder deal table, where Jules and Lolotte are playing dominoes for a lump of sugar, mused Alfred de Musset; and in that nook by the casement Henri Murger outlined with a stumpy pencil the "*Vie de Bohème*," heedless of the cup of black coffee that grew cold. There was a tradition that the *petit bonhomme*, Adolphe Thiers, had run up a score of 3 francs 75 cents there when he was *dans la dèche* (as all of us who are worth our salt are one time or other).

But the tradition on which the company prided itself most was that which gave its name to the hostelry. Recall the pig of the Latin Quarter which

I have mentioned — a careless, happy-go-lucky grunter. He seemed to have drunk-in the free-and-easy spirit of the schools with the atmosphere he breathed. Could he sing he would have been a troubadour. As it was, he was the students' pig, and rubbed his snout against the knees of every roysterer who passed, with the same love that the soldier's dog showed for a red-coat, and the fireman's dog for the Salvage Corps. He roved about the Quartier in the morning, a chartered libertine, and nobody molested him; but invariably, and with the regularity of clockwork, he sat down, as noontide approached, on his haunches opposite the window of the Bohemian tavern, which was then called *Le Cochon d'Inde*—"The Guinea Pig." The students never failed to hand him out a platter of slops and to pat his sleek head; but when the platter was licked clean, he did not stir. There he sat, in the same position, motionless, as if he were cut in stone, with his gaze wistfully fixed on the *dame du comptoir*. She was a bonnie buxom damsel, with laughing grey eyes, and cherry cheeks, and hair that fell on her plump shoulders like thick skeins of soft, shining, golden silk. Not till the shutters were put up could that pig be induced to quit his ground; and then, with drooping ears and tail, he reluctantly crept off. But how cheerfully he trotted up next morning before midday, by which hour Titine had taken her seat behind the counter of zinc, and was humming a *chansonette*, while she showered sprightly banter on the customers, and deftly passed the crochet-hooks through the capeline on which she was everlastingly engaged.

One noontide Titine was not in her accustomed place; but the pig was in his. Long and earnestly he looked; at last he boldly entered and put his fore feet on the counter, knocking over a glass of absinthe, and the female, who was Titine's substitute—a vixen she—beat him about the head with a crumb-brush, and angrily shouted, "*Pas de cochonnerie!*" The pig slunk back, mortified at the rebuff, and staggering to the old spot at the other side of the lane, sprawled at full length on the hard pavement. When night fell he sorrowfully departed. Next day he re-appeared, but Titine did not. He did not dare to enter—the vixen was there; but he sank heavily down, groaned and whined in the mos piteous human manner, and big beady tear-drops gushed from his eyes. The students contributed the customary platter, but he refused his food. Youth is proverbially careless, and with a "*Sacr-r-é cochon!*" the sufferer was dismissed.

For ten days this scene was repeated. Titine was sick in the Hospital of the Pitié, and then she returned, paler than when she had left, but still the same bright, joyous Titine. The pig came down as usual, stepping feebly and wearing a dejected air, for the poor fellow had lost at least fifty-four kilogrammes; his ribs were all spare ribs, and the flesh hung on his sides in great idle collops. Suddenly he saw her: his eyes lit, his nostrils distended, his whole frame quivered with emotion, and he gave one exultant grunt that echoed through the neighbourhood. An Anglo-Indian in the Rue St. Jacques thought it was the trumpeting of an elephant. Titine, who was receiving congratulations, turned round at the noise, murmured, "*Ce chèr cochon!*" and tickled his ear with her soft hand. The pig was an altered pig that day. He ravenously fell upon half a dozen consecutive platters of slops, and visibly—almost miraculously—improved in appearance. He was himself again.

Next morning he trotted up brisk and blithe as ever. But no Titine was there. What was the meaning of this? There was a holiday group at the threshold, and by-and-bye Titine came out, arrayed in virginal lace, white gloves on her hands, and a wreath of orange blossoms on her hair, which gleamed through the folds of a gossamer veil. Ah! then the pig knew what was meant. The wedding party hied it to the adjoining church of St. Etienne du Mont; the pig never made a complaint, but followed it to the Place du Panthéon, and deliberately putting himself in the way of an omnibus, was run over and killed.

The double event was known all over the Quartier before night, and the students determined that in future "The Guinea Pig" should be known as "The Faithful Pig." This is believed to be the first instance on record of a pig having committed suicide through disappointed affection. May it be the last!

J. A. O'Shea.

A ROW IN THE BUTTER MARKET.

A Tale of Geneva.

IN Geneva, close beside the lake,
Whose mere mention sets Swiss hearts a-flutter,
In the Place Dumollard, do they take
To the market splendid Savoy butter,—
For your Savoyards in making this
(Spite of *Ranz des Vaches*) eclipse the Swiss.

Butter is so unctuous and smooth,
You would think its virtues oleaginous
Those, who deal in it, would calm and soothe,
Making all that 's bony cartilaginous :—
Such impressions would, alas ! receive a
Death-blow in that market at Geneva.

What the chemists label "butyrine,"
Though you might believe it to be placid,
Stirs the bile, and stimulates the spleen,
Acting something like sulphuric acid :—
Anyhow, the dames who deal in butter,
Deal in language, too, I dare not utter !

Jenni and Aline set up their stalls
Opposite, on each side of the path,
And—as oft humanity befalls—
Being rivals, nursed a secret wrath.
Jenni at Aline would scowl her best,
Who returned the hate with interest.

Mrs. Jones, the wife of Jones the banker,
Sought at times the one—at times the other,
Which of course could only make the ranker
Hatred, always hard enough to smother.
Mrs. Jones of this was not aware;
Or at least, if knowing, did not care.

Mrs. J. was somewhat of a screw,
Though to see her dress you 'd not have thought it—
Found Aline's pound cheaper by a sou.
So went straight from Jenni's stall and bought
Took her purchase home with peaceful mind,
Knowing not the storm she left behind.

Jenni felt Aline had undersold her—
Got her customer, our Mrs. Jones—
And in language quite outspoken told her
Her opinion, in the loudest tones.
And Aline in terms not more select
Met her scolding with return direct.

I shall not attempt to give the *jargot*—
Here 's the recipe :—take (if you 've got)
Equal parts of blasphemy and *argot*,
Season—shake up well—and serve it hot.
That 's the sort of dish Aline and Jenni
Made for something less than half a penny !

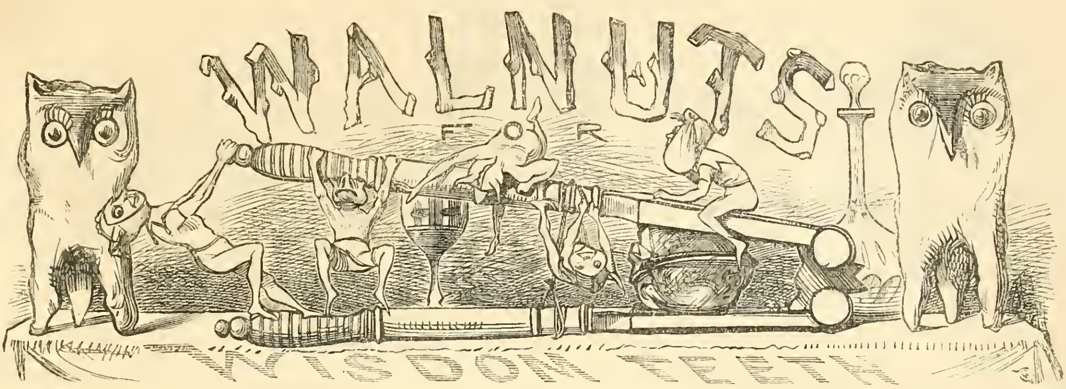
Fast from bad to worse, till worst of all,
Jenni, scolding fast as she could splutter,
Snatched up in her fury from her stall
A pound-pat of her neglected butter,
And—before another word was said—
Flung it fiercely at her rival's head.

Snatching from her stall in turn a pat,
Blind with rage, Aline at once retorted.
Jenni, not to be outdone like that,
To another *matole* swift resorted ;
And ere friends had time to interfere
With the waste—behold, their stalls were clear !

When with empty pockets home they went,
Let us hope they both of them reflected
How their butter had been vainly spent,
And their purpose had not been effected.
Anyhow, thereafter these two foes
Far apart their place for market chose.

Crying o'er spilt milk is quite absurd—
Where 's the use when it is in the gutter?
But—just listen to a warning word—
Don't we often throw away the butter,
So it seems to me, of life a scholar,
As they did there in the Place Dumollard?

H.



CHARADE.

My First is very nice, no doubt,
But rather apt to give you gout,
Which as my Second, you'll agree,
Not quite desirable would be.
But ask your doctor, and it will be droll
To me if he does not that fate—my Whole!

◆

SQUARE OF EVERY WORD PUZZLE.

1. A feature you may follow.
2. A mount, of old renowned.
3. What grapes are, you can't swallow.
4. What help you to a sound.

CHARADE.

Old Plutus rolled in gold—
His pockets nearly burst;
But he said he did not mean to be sold,
And didn't believe in my First.

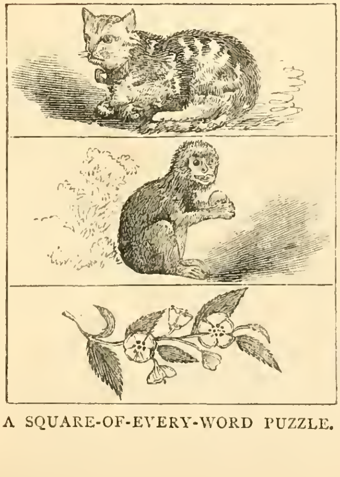
Old Plutus said he spurned
All paper, for he reckoned
He would not be paid if the notes were burned,
Or happened to get my Second.

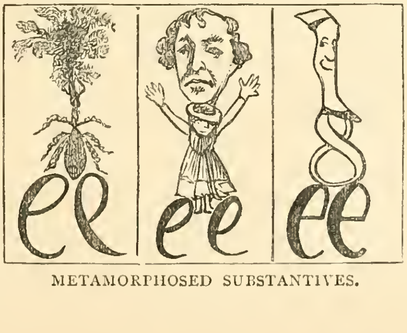
Old Plutus was much concerned
At his death, the miserly soul!
For he knew the wealth he had hardly earned
Would be spent by his relatives when they turned
His funeral into my Whole.

◆

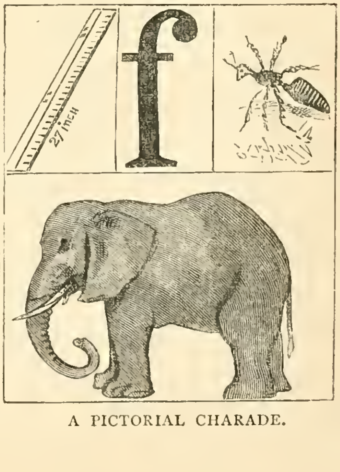
A PROVERB IN RHYME.

The trees no more are green,
The swallows haste away,
The sun less oft is seen,
The flow'rs speed to decay.

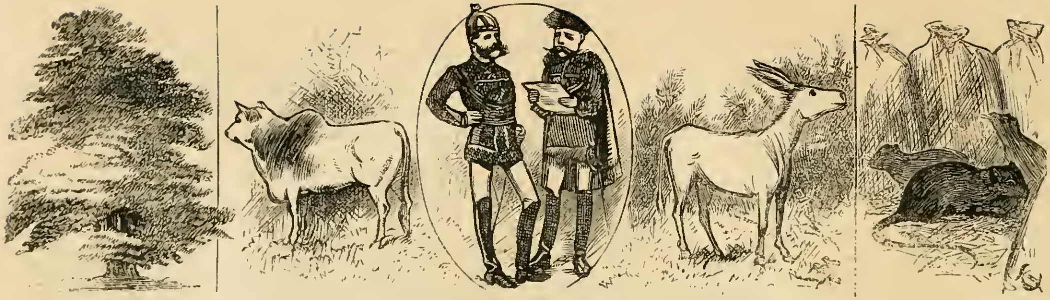

A SQUARE-OF-EVERY-WORD PUZZLE.



METAMORPHOSED SUBSTANTIVES.



A PICTORIAL CHARADE.



OUR IMPERIAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

⁂ The chief words are in the centre oval, the steps on each side.

◆

LOGOGRIPHE.

I AM a word—for letters ten I stickle ;
My meaning is "unstable," or say "fickle."

My 8, 9, 7, 4, 1, 2, 10,
A maiden's "name," admired by men.

My 9 and 6 and 3 and 4,
Means "thin !" a style I don't adore.

My 3 and 8 and 9 and 6,
As "competent" at once I fix.

My 8 and 10, 4, 1, and 2,
A "form" which in a school you view.

My 2 and 7 and 4 and 5,
To "execute" one who 's alive.

My 8, 10, 3, 5, 9, and 6,
A "dog" for hunting, not for tricks.

My 6 and 9 and 8 and 3,
An island in a tideless sea.

My 8 and 7 and 9 and 6,
A "bundle" of what 's used for wicks.

My 8 and 9 and 3 and 4,
A "vegetable" you can store.

My 5 and 3 and 9 and 6,
A "breeze" that breaks a vessel's sticks.

My 1 and 9, 6, 3, and 4,
Is "pure"—not foul or spotted o'er.

My 10 and 3, 5, 9, and 6,
A "bird" that steals young lambs and chicks.

And now into my 1, 7, 4
A foaming draught, I pray you, pour ;
Do not the welcome liquor mix,
But let it be my 3, 9, 6 !

◆

A DIAMOND PUZZLE.

1. A numeral and consonant.
2. A liquor, which refuse I can't.
3. A useful box, as you will grant.
4. A demon mischievous in vice.
5. A vegetable very nice.

Now find the meaning in a trice.
The perpendicular one sees
In every little knot of trees.
And for the horizontal, ask
The elephant to aid your task.

◆

REBUS.

I AM a monosyllable signifying earthenware. Divide me, and my first half is a near relative. Reverse me, and I am a sharp short detonation. Behead me now, and you will find me on cloth. Reverse me once more now, and behead me, and at once I become indefinite, and I remain so even if you cut off my tail. Restore me to my original state, reverse me, and pop me in the jaws of a monster, and you 'll very likely burn your fingers.

NOTICE.– The Solutions of the Puzzles will be given in the Christmas Number of "FUN." No answers will be received after the 15th December.

DALZIEL BROTHERS, CAMDEN PRESS, LONDON, N.W.

r
e

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
AA 000 472 983 6

The Library of
DAVID FREEDMAN

BOOK NO.……………………………